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THE GREAT FIRES

IN

CHICAGO AND THE WEST.

HISTORY AND INCIDENTS,

Losses and Sufferings,

BENEVOLENCE OF THE NATIVES,

ETC., ETC.

6179 6^v A CHICAGO CLERGYMAN.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED A RECORD OF THE GREAT CONFLAGRATIONS
OF THE PAST.

ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS AND SCENES.

PUBLISHED BY

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“ Hear the loud alarum bells—

Brazen bells !

What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells !

In the startled ear of night

How they scream out their affright !

Too much horrified to speak,

They can only shriek, shriek,

Out of tune,

In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,

In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,

Leaping higher, higher, higher,

With a desperate desire

And a resolute endeavor,

Now—now to sit or never,

By the side of the pale-faced moon.

Oh, the bells, bells, bells,

What a tale their terror tells

Of despair !

How they clang, and clash, and roar,

What a horror they outpour

On the bosom of the palpitating air ! ”

HISTORY

OF THE

GREAT FIRE IN CHICAGO.

AMONG the saddest events of history will rank the conflagration which began in Chicago on the night of October 7th, 1871, was renewed on the night of the 8th, and raged with unchecked violence, consuming more than one-half of the area of the city, destroying several hundred millions of property, occasioning large loss of life, and making homeless nearly one hundred thousand persons.

The whole business portion of the South and North sides of the city were laid in ruins, and nothing resisted the appalling fury of the wasting element. The engines were totally helpless, and many of them scarcely escaped burning; fire-proofs were consumed as in a moment the flames lapped over whole blocks and across the river; the miracle of Mount Carmel was reproduced. When everything was licked up and devoured by the fire-fiend, people were caught in their dwellings and burned, or were overtaken on the streets and destroyed; and only when the city was consumed in the track of the hurricane did the elemental war cease, and the assaulting foe rest from his deadly work. For days the fire smouldered, and night after night the heavens glowed like the canopy of hell, and threatened univer-

sal ruin. But, thanks to a merciful Providence, the track of desolation covered not the whole of the great city, and a portion was left to furnish shelter for the homeless, and as a nucleus for rebuilding the Metropolis of the North-west.

Here we may briefly notice the origin and growth of Chicago, to enable the reader to form some idea of the nature and magnitude of the calamity which has befallen a lately prosperous community. Such a sketch may also serve to exhibit the causes of the almost world-wide and unexampled sympathy manifested toward her suffering people. The original prairie bordering Lake Michigan was intersected by a lagoon or bayou extending half a mile west, and then forking north and south for a long distance. This gave room for a harbor, and was the suggestion of a city. Here, at the shore and near the mouth of the river, in 1804 a fort was built to cover a trading post with Indians and the incoming emigrants. It was rebuilt in 1816, and abandoned in 1837, when the entire population was 4,470. In twenty years the city had multiplied its numbers so that in 1857 there were gathered on this level plain 130,000 persons. In 1871 there were, by census returns, carefully made out, 334,000 people in Chicago. When was there such a growth in so short a time, and a progress so real and substantial? Evidently Nature designed the location to be the site of a great city, and a gathering-place of the nations. Here is one of the best harbors, and thirty miles of wharves and docks; here centre several thousand miles of railways; here are accommodations for receiving and shipping grain unsurpassed in the world; here is the natural commercial depot of the immense mineral resources of the vast northwestern regions, and the fruit-market is unequalled anywhere. To many all this seems exaggeration. But hear the words of Hon. Benjamin F. Wade:—

→ “Again I say to you that the importance of this location transcends what most now think of it. It will never have but

two rivals. San Francisco, on the Pacific, may contest the palm of greatness with it, and New York has got to run fast to get out of its way. You may deem that an extravagant expression, but recollect that New York had to struggle for one hundred and fifty years before she had the population and wealth Chicago has to-day. No people of this country have more of intelligence, more of enterprise, more of the American Yankee go-aheadativeness than the people of Chicago. I say again, that there are but two cities on this continent that can compete with it for the palm of greatness. Thirty-two years ago it had a few rude buildings, and I have been amazed to-day, as I passed through and viewed the wonderful progress that has been made; I am sure I have had no conception of the importance of this point, and, what is still more important, of the vastness and richness of the great country that lies west, and which is bound to contribute in the future so much to build up the second, if not the first city on this continent." Such was the language of the great statesman of Ohio in 1866. Five years succeeding this, and the horrible conflagration finds the city almost transformed, so that the orator would scarcely have recognized many of the principal localities in the heart of the city, where magnificent edifices had risen upon the sites of former buildings, or sprung up on vacant land. Potter Palmer, a merchant prince, had expended immense sums upon buildings for stores and hotels which hardly had any rivals in expensiveness and beauty in the old world. He had also commenced a new hotel, which was to have cost upwards of a million dollars, for which he had arranged in Europe at a low rate of interest. The Pacific Hotel was also about completed by a company having a capital of one million. In giving their grounds of confidence in entering upon their gigantic enterprise, they said, there are 426 trains moving daily each way on our railways, and some of our solid statistics are as follows :—

Wheat received, bushels.....	17,394,409
Corn “ “	20,189,775
Total all grain received, bushels.....	61,315,593
Flour manufactured, bbls.....	443,976
Grain shipments (equal to), bushels.....	54,745,903
High-wines manufactured, gallons.....	7,063,364
Hogs packed.....	900,000
“ received.....	1,693,158
Cattle received.....	532,964
Lumber received, feet.....	1,019,000,000
Value of manufactures.....	\$88,848,120
Incomes (estimated).....	\$74,000,000
Internal Revenue collected.....	\$7,984,000
Clearing House returns.....	\$10,676,036
National Banks.....	17
Private Banks.....	10
National Banks' capital.....	\$6,800,000
“ undivided surplus.....	\$2,715,000
Total bank capital.....	\$12,250,000
Sales of Real Estate (transfers).....	8,418
Value of Real Estate, total.....	\$37,558,455
Chicago Post-Office, letters and papers delivered..	22,928,343

Right upon the heels of these grand enterprises followed others of equal extent and boldness, projected and sustained by men of brains and energy, integrity and courage, all of which exhibited the importance of this harbor and centre of commerce, and serve to help us to realize what devastation the enemy has wrought in sweeping all these monuments level with the ground. Not that all Chicago's buildings are down, but the central portion of business blocks is entirely gone, and what remains constitutes but a specimen of the splendor and glory reduced to ashes. Some 3,000 acres are wasted by fire, and so utterly ruined that

almost nothing but débris remains. The city and county had built and just entered two wings, each owning one, to the court house in a great square, and these stand partly erect, with the old building in the middle, gloomy and desolate in their destruction. The Honore block, probably as beautiful a structure as can be found for business purposes on the globe, built of Athens stone highly wrought, having six stories with mansard roofs extending 190 feet on Dearborn street, and 114 on Adams, was in the heat of the battle and is a heap of dust. Farwell Hall, one of the great halls for concerts and lectures, and the seat of operations for the Young Men's Christian Association, the home of the Daily Prayer Meeting, is ashes and rubbish. And so the Board of Trade building perished, along with factories, distilleries, breweries, bridges, churches, colleges, theatres, depots, water-works, warehouses, and private dwellings, all involved in one total wreck. When a glance is thus taken at the ruin accomplished, one can be prepared in some measure to estimate the appalling nature of this calamity. But the effect becomes greatly intensified when it is remembered that many lost their lives in the flames, and tens of thousands lost all—homes, property, and hopes of success, and were driven out destitute, to become objects of charity. A particular account of the origin and progress of the fire, with reminiscences and actual incidents, will give the reader a better idea of the horrors and marvels of what must be pronounced one of the memorable catastrophes of Time.

It was a period of peculiar drought in the whole western country, and the dryness of the atmosphere was so remarkable that an intelligent physician, observing that his plants became desiccated in a few hours after the most profuse watering from the hydrant, trembled all day Sunday lest a spark of fire should drop near his dwelling. There was a strange lack of moisture in the air, which condition did not change until Monday afternoon. On Saturday evening, October 8, about 11 o'clock, a

fire caught in a planing mill, west of the river, and within a block of it, in the neighborhood of a wooden district full of frame houses, lumber and coal-yards, and every kind of combustible material. Some contend that it originated in a beer saloon, and thence was communicated to the planing-mill.

In the almost inflammable state of the atmosphere, and under the propulsion of a strong wind, the tinder-boxes on every side ignited, and ruin rioted for hours over a space of twenty acres, and destroyed a million dollars worth of property. Grand and awful as this conflagration seemed to the thronging thousands, who crowded every approach and standpoint where a view could be obtained, it paled and faded away in comparison with that of the following night; but, as the event proved, this first fire saved the remainder of the west division of the city, for when the raging element came leaping and roaring onward it found nothing to burn, and then paused, and was stayed, while it rushed across the river, and satiated itself upon the noblest and best portion of the town, east and north.

This renewal of the fire, or, as it really was an independent conflagration, began at 9 on Sunday night in a barn, where an old woman was milking by the light of a kerosene lamp, which was thrown over and emptied upon the combustible stuff that lay around.

The starting-point was southwest of that of Saturday night. The wind was blowing a gale from the southwest, and hurled the blazing brands and showers of glittering sparks aloft and plunged them down upon the dry masses beyond. There was a hope that the river running north and south would interpose a barrier to the fog.

The fire still lapped along the edge of the river, and still, as in a savage hate of man, over whom it had for once triumphed, flung its sparks and brands further, further into the water, trying to plant some messenger of destruction where it longed to be it-

self. By the glare of its burning the night became a mockery of day in its abnormal, shifting light. Was there no foothold on which it could cross? This was the question asked by the fire. "The bridges! the bridges!" shouted the multitude, and one by one their ponderous ligneous lengths were swung around and left heading up and down the stream. At length the fire answered its question by flinging a shower of burning brands upon the Adams street bridge, and the wind, the friend of the fire, fanned them until the bridge was all aflame. Now it had a shorter distance to leap, and with a savage bound the fire was in the heart of the city—in its fat, rich heart, where active wealth had piled its palaces of commerce and housed its treasures in with iron and stone, and thought it was free from the sweep of flood or flame. Eastward the fire journeyed with its fevered stride, eating like a withering canker through the vitals of the city. It was not long before the Michigan Southern depot had risen up in smoke and blaze and fell in ruins, scattering a deeper volume of destruction around than ever before. Now northward the hell angel strode to the emporium of rich produce it was longing for. Now it hung around a bank, burst open its doors, shivered its windows, scorched through its roof and toiled and burned its fiercest till the great safe—ah, the safe! had succumbed to its blasting, melting breath. The fire-bells all over the city were ringing continually—a terrible tocsin, with the one word fire in its scorching throat. The people had but to wake to know what was the matter. The danger seemed everywhere. Out in the street, half clad, dragging what could be snatched in the hurry of flight, the strong man, the half-fainting women, the children with terror pictured in their wide-open eyes, all hurrying, with "nowhere to go." All the fire force in the city was combating the flames as fearlessly as brave men with their hearths and homes at stake well might. Without regard to whom it reached the panting fire licked and consumed hotels and stores. Now the Court House,

now the Sherman House, anon the Western Union Telegraph Company's office, then the Tremont House, next the Chamber of Commerce, far-famed Farwell Hall—whatever lay in its fated path—until it flung itself upon the great Union depot with its spread of buildings, and had sacked with its cremating arms the corn-stored grain elevators by the lake and river side. Again it met the waters, and again it leaped them, landing on the north side of the town. Here it had nothing to stay its steps. Wooden houses were but fuel in its way, and greedily it enveloped and devoured them. Onward for a mile it stretched as the day broke, fear before and ruin and ashes behind. Animals burst forth from keeping and rushed blind among the flames, adding to the terror of the scene as they gave forth their cries of dread. The homeless began to multiply in number through the blackened light of morning that paled but did not subdue the flames. A horrid thought flashed to the mind of all. "The water-works are in danger if the wind lives."

Up to Chicago avenue the fire raged unabated in its fury. The rumor that human beings were perishing in the flames became a certainty, and what made the agony deeper was that none could tell how many. Can it ever be told? Eastward from Chicago avenue, with the whole portion of the city to the south, one seething, reeking sea of fire, it went and suddenly the water supply failed. It was said that the water works were burned. It was denied, reaffirmed, and again denied. The men in power, with the Mayor at their head, were acting with the greatest energy. To the other cities of the West went forth a cry for firemen, and one and all the cities responded. To the world went out the simple tragic demand, which, in its brevity and pith alone tells its harrowing story:—"Send us food for the suffering. Our city is in ashes." Houses were blown down that the fire might be arrested, but it seized on the débris and burned that too. Would the wilting wind never die? It did not fall, it only

changed, as if it had exhausted all the demons whence it came, and then had called upon the North to send out its vandal breeze.

And yet it was salvation to the West and South Divisions, so much of which survived, that the wind blew from the same quarter Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and continually until the fire had burned itself out. On Monday night there was a gentle rain, which seemed to many a God-send, and yet added to the forlorn condition of thousands who crowded out to the prairies and the groves north and west of the fire. Here many died from terror and exposure, and it is estimated that five hundred births occurred during these two days and nights. Some were confined in the streets and vehicles, and others found a temporary shelter until more permanent means were devised for their comfort.

The greater part of the fire in the North Division occurred after daylight on Monday, and the spectacle presented in that quarter was such as would be presented by a community fleeing before an invading army. Every vehicle that could be got was hurrying from the burning district loaded with people and their goods. Light buggies, barouches, carts, and express-wagons were mingled indiscriminately, and laden with an indescribable variety of articles. Others were hurrying to the scene from curiosity, or to complete the work of rescuing friends and property before the monster could destroy them.

People crowded the walks, leading children or pet dogs, carrying plants in pots, iron-kettles not worth ten cents, or some valueless article seized in the excitement; many looked dolefully upon the lurid clouds, still far away, and wondered whether they and their homes were in danger; and others looked as though they had spent the night in a coal-pit or a fiery furnace. There was such "hurrying to and fro" as the world seldom see, with universal agony and distress.

Families became separated and were looking for one another

and often in vain was the search—they would meet only at the great Judgment Day, which seemed to some almost at hand.

A locomotive engineer was on his freight-train, forty miles from the city, when he heard the fire was raging on Michigan Avenue. He said, "I asked permission to go on with my train and was forbidden; I put on steam, and they put down the brakes, but I pulled my train as near to the depot as I could, and left it in charge of the fireman. I hurt nobody and did no harm to anything; I went straight to the place where I left my family, and dragged out their bones. When I came back to my situation they told me I was discharged, and I am now homeless and helpless."

Men were desperate, and deemed almost anything justifiable. One who saw that he could not escape, opened his veins that he might not know the horrors of death by fire. Another, probably rendered insane by losses and terror, was found with his throat cut from ear to ear. Men who were laboring to rescue their books and papers from the peril, were so involved in the mazes of the fire, that they tried several streets before they were able to escape, and then suffered serious inconveniences or injury in the final struggle that saved them. One, in trying to gather a few things from his room, fell suffocated, and, recovering presence of mind, crawled to the window, and calling on men to catch him, leaped from the second story, and was able to rejoin his family. A fireman brought a two-year old child to a lady, which was snatched out of the upper story of a lofty building in the heart of the fire. The little thing was scorched and singed, and when asked, "Where is papa?" he answered, "Gone to church." "Where is mamma?" "Gone to church." So unexpected was the fire, that the parents had not time to find their darling after church. Some 300 were caged up near the river, and taken off by the steamer that lay close at hand. Others, hurried out of their home and cut off from egress by any street, fled to the

lake shore, and as the furious element closed around them they were pressed into the water, and kept themselves for hours by dipping their heads into the cool element. Children were immersed repeatedly, in order to keep them from being scorched, and many came from their wet refuges more dead than alive. A family who had spent several years abroad, and collected many valuable works of art and souvenirs of their journeys, were driven from one place to another, and finally took refuge in a stable. The proprietor begged them to take his carriage and drive it off to save it. In this they escaped several miles to a place of safety, having nothing left but what they wore upon their persons.

A man at the corner of Division and Brandt streets had apparently secured his household goods in an open lot; but the flames mercilessly attacked his effects, and seeing there was no further chance of saving them, he knelt down and offered a brief prayer, after which he arose, clasped his hands in wild despair, and looking to heaven exclaimed, "God help me now," and was soon lost to view in the dense smoke through which he endeavored to make his escape.

Mr. Kerfoot gives the following graphic account of his escape from the fire with his wife and children: "Being the owner of a horse and carriage which I used to go to and fro from my business, when I became satisfied that my house would soon be enveloped, I brought my horse and carriage before the house, and placed my wife and children in it. There was then no room for me, so I mounted the back of the animal and acted as postilion. While driving through the flame and smoke which enveloped us on all hands, I came across a gentleman who had his wife in a buggy, and was between the thills hauling it himself. I shouted to him to hitch his carriage on behind mine, which he did, and then got in beside his wife. I then drove forward as fast as I could, for the flames were raging around us. After proceeding

a short distance, another gentleman was found standing beside the street, with a carriage, waiting for a horse, which was not likely to come. I directed him to fasten on behind the second carriage, which he did, and in this way we whipped up and got out of the way of the flames with our wives and children, thank God."

A remarkable instance of courage and presence of mind is told of Mr. E. I. Tinkham, of the Second National Bank. On Monday morning, before the fire had reached that building, Mr. Tinkham went to the safe and succeeded in getting out \$600,000. This pile of greenbacks he packed into a common trunk, and hired a colored man for \$1,000 to convey it to the Milwaukee depot. Fearing to be recognized in connection with the precious load, Mr. Tinkham followed the man for a time at some distance, but soon lost sight of him. He was then overtaken by the fire-storm, and was driven toward the lake on the south side. Here, after passing through several narrow escapes from suffocation, he succeeded in working his way, by some means, to a tug-boat, and got round to the Milwaukee depot, where he found the colored man waiting for him, with the trunk, according to promise. Mr. Tinkham paid the man the \$1,000, and started with the trunk for Milwaukee. The money was safely deposited in Marshall & Illsley's bank, of that city.

Mr. Nathaniel Bacon, of Niles, Michigan, student-at-law with Messrs. Tenney, McClellan & Tenney, at No. 120 Washington street, slept in their office. On waking, at about 1 o'clock, and seeing the Court-House on fire, he saw that the office, which was immediately opposite, would surely go. Judging that one of the safes in the office would not prove fire-proof, he promptly emptied the contents of his trunk on the floor of the doomed building, and, filling it with the interior contents of the safe—books, valuable papers, money, &c.—shouldered the trunk and carried it to a place of safety on Twenty-Second street, losing thereby all

his own clothing and effects except what he had on. That young man is a hero.

In the midst of all that was sad and terrible there was an occasional gleam of the humorous.

—One merchant, who found his safe and its contents destroyed, quietly remarked that there was no blame attached to the safe; that it was of chilled iron, and would have stood, but that the fire had taken the *chill all out*.

—A firm of painters on Madison street bulletin their removal as follows, on a sign-board erected like a guide-board upon the ruins of their old establishment :—

.....
 : MOORE & GOE, :
 : HOUSE AND SIGN PAINTERS, :
 : Removed to 111 Desplaines st., :
 : Capital, \$000,000.30. :
 :

—An editor of a daily paper has received several poetical effusions suggested by the late disaster; but he declines them all, on the ground that it is wasteful to print anything which requires every line with a capital, when capital is as scarce as it is now in Chicago.

—A bride who entered the holy married state on Tuesday evening, determined to do so in a calico dress, in deference both to the proprieties and the necessities of the occasion. But she desired that her *toilette de chambre* should be, if possible, on a more gorgeous scale. Being destitute of a *robe de nuit* of suitable elegance, she sent out to several neighbors of her temporary hostess to borrow such a garment, stipulating that it must be a *fine one*. So peculiar is the feminine nature, however, that her modest request excited no enthusiasm in her behalf among the ladies to whom it came. This is not a joke.

—A sign-board, stuck in the ruins of a building on Madison street, reads : “Owing to circumstances over which we had no control, we have removed,” etc.

CHICAGO, October 12, 1871.

To the Editor of the *Chicago Evening Journal* :—

The attention of Chicagoans is called to the 8th chapter of Deuteronomy, and the clergy of the city are respectfully requested to take the same for a text on Sunday morning next.

MERCHANT.

—One of our merchants, reported insane, was heard from at New York—where he had gone to bury a sister—in the following noble manner :—

Mrs. Potter Palmer :

I have particulars of fire. Am perfectly reconciled to our losses. We shall not be embarrassed. Have an abundance left. Be cheerful and do all possible for sufferers. Will return by first train after funeral.

POTTER PALMER.

The scene presented on Wabash avenue on Monday, for a period extending from 4 o'clock A.M. till late in the day, was a most extraordinary one, calling to mind most vividly the retreat of a routed army. The lower part of the avenue had, at an early hour, been occupied by residents of burning quarters, who sought safety for themselves and their chattels by depositing them on the grass-plats skirting the sidewalks. For a long distance these plats were occupied by families, mostly of the lower classes, with their household goods. They supposed that they had discovered a place of security, but their confidence in this regard proved unfounded. As the fire commenced spreading up the avenue a wild scene of confusion ensued. The street was crowded with vehicles of all descriptions, many drawn by men, who found it impossible to procure draught animals. The sidewalks were filled with a hurrying crowd, bearing in their arms and

upon their backs and heads clothing, furniture, etc. Ladies dressed in elegant costumes, put on with the view of preserving them, and with costly apparel of all kinds thrown over their arms and shoulders, staggered along under the unwonted burden. Poor women, with mattresses upon their heads, or weighted down with furniture, tottered with weary steps up the crowded street. Nearly every one wore a stern expression, and moved on without a word, as if they had braced up their minds to endure the worst without manifesting any emotion. Occasionally, however, the wail of women and children rent the air, bringing tears to the eyes of those who witnessed the manifestations. Poor little children shivered in the cold night air, and looked with wildly opened eyes upon the scenes they could not comprehend. Ludicrous incidents were of occasional occurrence, lighting up with a sort of horrible humor the terrible realities of the situation. Women would go by with dogs in their arms—their pets being all they had saved from the ruins of their homes. An octogenarian ran into a yard with a large cat enfolded in his feeble embrace. Men dragging wagons wore green veils over their faces to protect their eyes from the blinding dust. Drunken men staggered among the crowds, apparently possessed of the idea that the whole affair was a grand municipal spree, in which they were taking part as a duty that should be discharged by all good citizens. Trucks passed up street loaded with trunks, on which sat ladies in costly garb, and with diamonds in their ears and on their fingers. But one day before they would have scorned the idea of riding in anything less imposing than a luxurious landau or coupé; but their pride was levelled in the presence of the universally imminent danger, and they were thoroughly glad to get the humblest cart in which to place themselves and their valuables.

The greater portion of the people knew not whither they were going. All they knew was that the horrible fire was behind

them and they must move on. The stream poured southward for hours, the broad avenue being filled from house to house with men, women, children, horses, mules, vehicles, wheelbarrows—everything that could move or be moved. Truckmen and express drivers were hailed from the steps of houses, or eagerly pursued by the occupants, with the view of securing their aid in removing household goods to places of safety. In many instances the appeals were unsuccessful, their services having been previously engaged by other parties; but when they were disengaged they charged the most exorbitant prices, ranging from \$5 to \$100 for a load, and turning up their noses at offers of amounts less than they asked. This class of people made great profit out of the calamities of their fellow-citizens. Their pockets may be heavy to-day, but their consciences, if they have any, should be still heavier. The instances of generosity were, however, far in excess of those of greed and selfishness. People from districts which had not already been burned, or who had secured their own goods, turned in with a will and worked to assist their friends, and frequently rendered aid to persons whom they did not know. Good angels, in the shape of women, distributed food among the sufferers, and spoke kind words to those who seemed to labor under the severest affliction. Human nature, God be thanked, has its bright as well as its dark side.

Some of the scenes that transpired about and in the fire were disgraceful beyond measure. The saloons were, many of them thrown open, and men exhorted to free drinking needed but one invitation. Hundreds were soon dead drunk, or fighting and screaming; many thus fell victims to the flames, and some were dragged away by main force and rescued from roasting. Even respectable men, seeing that all was lost, sought to drown their misery by intoxication.

But worse than this were the instances of theft and cold-blooded avarice which occurred and have come to light. A

book-keeper engaged in conveying away the firm's records fell fainting in the alley behind the store, overcome by exertion and suffocated by the smoke and dust. The shock restored him to consciousness, and upon attempting to rise he found himself unable to stand. Just then a man was passing, and he hailed him with a request for help. The wretch offered to assist for a hundred dollars. The fallen man said, "I have but ten, and I will give you that." For this amount he gave his arm to the poor sufferer, and saved his life. A girl carried her sewing-machine to four different points, and was forced from each by the advancing fiend. At last an expressman seized her treasure, and in spite of all her efforts drove away with it. Said the impoverished girl, "Do you wonder Chicago burned?" In front of a wholesale house the sidewalk was bloody from the punishment inflicted by the police upon sneak-thieves. Trunks were rifled after their owners had placed them out of reach of fire. They were broken open by dozens on the lake shore, and the empty trunks tossed into the water. Pieces of broadcloth were torn into strips three yards long and distributed among a party who said, "These will make us each a good suit." Persons who saw and heard these things were powerless, and the confusion was so terrible that no one could look out for any one but himself, or interfere for the protection of others' property. It was a time when the worst forces of society were jubilant, and all the villains had free course. The Court-House jail had one hundred and sixty prisoners, and these were let loose to prey upon the people in the time of their helplessness and extremity. Such an event was a public calamity; but humanity would not permit the poor wretches to perish there, and no means were at hand to convey them to any other place of confinement.

Speedily upon the appearance of daylight and the resumption of courage, the Mayor and a few citizens, like Hon. C. C. P. Holden, Alonzo Snider, and others, began to organize measures

for public safety and order. The following proclamation was issued, and gave confidence:—

“WHEREAS, in the Providence of God, to whose will we humbly submit, a terrible calamity has befallen our city, which demands of us our best efforts for the preservation of order and the relief of the suffering.

“BE IT KNOWN that the faith and credit of the city of Chicago is hereby pledged for the necessary expenses for the relief of the suffering. Public order will be preserved. The Police, and Special Police now being appointed, will be responsible for the maintenance of the peace and the protection of property. All officers and men of the Fire Department and Health Department will act as Special Policemen without further notice. The Mayor and Comptroller will give vouchers for all supplies furnished by the different Relief Committees. The headquarters of the City Government will be at the Congregational Church, corner of West Washington and Ann streets. All persons are warned against any acts tending to endanger property. All persons caught in any depredation will be immediately arrested.

“With the help of God, order and peace and private property shall be preserved. The City Government and committees of citizens pledge themselves to the community to protect them, and prepare the way for a restoration of public and private welfare.

“It is believed the fire has spent its force, and all will soon be well.

R. B. MASON, *Mayor.*

GEORGE TAYLOR, *Comptroller.*

(By R. B. MASON.)

CHARLES C. P. HOLDEN,
President Common Council.

T. B. BROWN,
President Board of Police.

“CHICAGO, October 9, 1871.”

The citizens were organized into a police force, and thousands patrolled the city with a desperate determination to preserve their property and to punish with sudden vengeance the incendiaries who were prowling about the city. The demoniac purposes of these villains who were attempting incendiarism were favored by the high winds and the dryness of everything combustible. The people were dreadfully excited in all parts of the city, and every rumor was caught up and magnified. But additional assurance was given by the presence of Gen. Phil. Sheridan, with the regulars and militia, to whom the burnt district was given up for protection. There lay hundreds of safes, either exposed or buried in the débris. When these were opened, ruffians would be on the watch to see whither the contents were conveyed. Cracksmen came in from other cities to take advantage of the disaster. But the gallant General was able to announce as follows:—

“HEAD-QUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,
CHICAGO, *Oct. 12.*

“*To His Honor the Mayor:—*

“The preservation of peace and good order of the city having been entrusted to me by your Honor, I am happy to state that no case of outbreak or disorder has been reported. No authenticated attempt at incendiarism has reached me, and the people of the city are calm, quiet, and well-disposed.

“The force at my disposal is ample to maintain order, should it be necessary, and protect the district devastated by fire. Still, I would suggest to citizens not to relax in their watchfulness until the smouldering fires of the burnt buildings are entirely extinguished.

“P. H. SHERIDAN,

“Lieutenant-General.”

There were hideous instances of cruelty and wickedness during the conflagration, which no provision could have prevent-

ed. The inmates of the jail were only released after the cupola of the building fell in, and while they were howling, praying, and fighting for escape. Immense battering-rams had no effect on the fastenings from without, and only at the last moment did the turnkey let them loose into the heart of the burning city. That which greatly facilitated the progress of the fire, and kept all the people in terror, was the burning of the famous water-works on the north side at an early hour on the morning of Monday. The query may arise, Why any lack of this fluid when a mighty lake rolled at the city's feet and a river flowed through its heart? "Water, water everywhere!" Probably no city has better supplies of water, now that from the bosom of an inland sea we draw fresh draughts in boundless abundance. The tunnel that connects the lake-shaft with the shore is far below the bottom and is safe, but the engines which lift the water and force it into reservoirs for distribution were exposed to the irresistible element, and by some strange fatality, whether accidental or otherwise, they early fell a prey to destruction. The grand tower stands unharmed, and all the connections underground remain intact.

But massive stone walls and slate roof afforded no protection, for the city was doomed. And now, when all was dust and smoke and fire, suddenly the hydrants ceased to flow, and a pang of alarm and consternation shot through the breasts of the population.

The public parks had water in their fountains and pools, and to these the multitudes resorted day and night, with every sort of vessel that could hold water. It was almost a ludicrous, but particularly a pitiable sight. The Artesian wells also sent out their supplies, in carts and wagons, all through the west division, and the horrors of thirst were averted. The first copious rain which fell was on Saturday, October 14th, and every householder made the most of this heavenly bounty. But the next question after

water was food. Our resources are all cut off; there is no business, and our hundred thousand people must have bread, and not for one day, but for many days.

The lurid flames shot up in masses that overwhelmed the city, and no one could tell when there would be a cessation of the work of ruin, or how sustenance could be provided. Fears of a bread-riot arose in many minds, because of the imminent approach of deadly want.

At this hour of our extremity, when all seemed toppling to destruction, a cry was heard like that of which we read in tales of shipwreck, when the lost discern a sail upon the waters. The tidings reached other towns and cities, and were flashed across the Atlantic, and instantly, spontaneously, nobly, munificently the responses came back, not only in words of cheer, but in substantial forms—car-loads of cooked food and provisions of every kind, good wholesome supplies, better than many of the poor had been wont to enjoy—clothing in bountiful abundance, and money to be used at the discretion of the authorities. Men who had not shed a tear till then, shook with uncontrollable emotion and wept for joy. The gratitude was equal to the charity, if such an equalization were possible.

We began to realize how intimately the interests of Chicago were bound up with those of the whole country and the world. Its losses were not local, but almost universal, so that the words of Schiller scarcely seemed inapplicable here:—

“ This kingly Wallenstein, whene’er he falls .
 Will drag a world to ruin down with him ;
 And as a ship that in the midst of ocean
 Catches fire, and shivering springs into the air,
 And in a moment scatters between sea and sky
 The crew it bore, so will he hurry to destruction
 Ev’ry one whose fate was joined with his.”

The representatives of all nations were here, and of all States,

and communities in North America—the business world were here by their money or agencies, and the fall of Chicago sent a tremor throughout the whole fabric of society. This may account, in part, for the uprising of all Christendom to assist in the terrific exigency, and roll away the burden that was crushing her into the dust.

We give several proclamations by the Governors of the States adjacent, whose people were fully roused to comprehend the calamity and meet the extreme demands of the suffering multitude:—

BY THE GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT. }

John M. Palmer, Governor of Illinois, To all whom these presents shall come, greeting:

Whereas, in my judgment, the great calamity that has overtaken Chicago, the largest city of the State; that has deprived many thousands of our citizens of homes and rendered them destitute; that has destroyed many millions in value of property, and thereby disturbing the business of the people and deranging the finances of the State, and interrupting the execution of the laws, is and constitutes “an extraordinary occasion” within the true intent and meaning of the eighth section of the fifth article of the Constitution.

Now, therefore, I, John M. Palmer, Governor of the State of Illinois, do by this, my proclamation, convene and invite the two Houses of the General Assembly in session in the city of Springfield, on Friday, the 13th day of the month of October, in the year of our Lord 1871, at 12 o'clock noon of said day, to take into consideration the following subjects:—

1. To appropriate such sum or sums of money, or adopt such other legislative measures as may be thought judicious, neces-

sary, or proper, for the relief of the people of the city of Chicago.

2. To make provision, by amending the revenue laws or otherwise, for the proper and just assessment and collection of taxes within the city of Chicago.

3. To enact such other laws and to adopt such other measures as may be necessary for the relief of the city of Chicago and the people of said city, and for the execution and enforcement of the laws of the State.

4. To make appropriations for the expenses of the General Assembly, and such other appropriations as may be necessary to carry on the State Government.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the great seal of State to be affixed.

[SEAL.] Done at the city of Springfield, this 10th day of October, A.D. 1871.

JOHN M. PALMER.

By the Governor,

EDWARD RUMMELL, *Secretary of State*.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF WISCONSIN.

To the People of Wisconsin :

Throughout the northern part of this State fires have been raging in the woods for many days, spreading desolation on every side. It is reported that hundreds of families have been rendered homeless by this devouring element, and reduced to utter destitution, their entire crops having been consumed. Their stock has been destroyed, and their farms are but a blackened desert. Unless they receive instant aid from portions not visited by this dreadful calamity, they must perish.

The telegraph also brings the terrible news that a large portion of the city of Chicago is destroyed by a conflagration, which is still raging. Many thousands of people are thus re-

duced to penury, stripped of their all, and are now destitute of shelter and food. Their sufferings will be intense, and many may perish unless provisions are at once sent to them from the surrounding country. They must be assisted now.

In the awful presence of such calamities the people of Wisconsin will not be backward in giving assistance to their afflicted fellow-men.

I, therefore, recommend that immediate organized effort be made in every locality to forward provisions and money to the sufferers by this visitation, and suggest to mayors of cities, presidents of villages, town supervisors, pastors of churches, and to the various benevolent societies, that they devote themselves immediately to the work of organizing effort, collecting contributions, and sending forward supplies for distribution.

And I entreat all to give of their abundance to help those in such sore distress.

Given under my hand, at the Capitol, at Madison, this 9th day of October, A. D. 1871.

LUCIUS FAIRCHILD.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF MICHIGAN.

STATE OF MICHIGAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
LANSING, *Oct. 9.*

The city of Chicago, in the neighboring State of Illinois, has been visited, in the providence of Almighty God, with a calamity almost unequalled in the annals of history. A large portion of that beautiful and most prosperous city has been reduced to ashes and is now in ruins. Many millions of dollars in property, the accumulation of years of industry and toil, have been swept away in a moment. The rich have been reduced to penury, the poor have lost the little they possessed, and many thousands of people rendered homeless and houseless, and are now without the absolute necessities of life. I, therefore, earnestly call upon the citizens of every portion of Michigan to take immediate measures

for alleviating the pressing wants of that fearfully afflicted city by collecting and forwarding to the Mayor or proper authorities of Chicago supplies of food as well as liberal collections of money. Let this sore calamity of our neighbors remind us of the uncertainty of earthly possessions, and that when one member suffers all the members should suffer with it. I cannot doubt that the whole people of the State will most gladly, and most promptly, and most liberally respond to this urgent demand upon their sympathy; but no words of mine can plead so strongly as the calamity itself.

HENRY P. BALDWIN,
Governor of Michigan.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF IOWA.

To the People of Iowa :

An appalling calamity has befallen our sister State. Her metropolis—the great city of Chicago—is in ruins. Over 100,000 people are without shelter or food, except as supplied by others. A helping hand let us now promptly give. Let the liberality of our people, so lavishly displayed during the long period of national peril, come again to the front, to lend succor in this hour of distress. I would urge the appointment at once of relief committees in every city, town, and township, and I respectfully ask the local authorities to call meetings of the citizens to devise ways and means to render efficient aid. I would also ask the pastors of the various churches throughout the State to take up collections on Sunday morning next, or at such other time as they may deem proper, for the relief of the sufferers. Let us not be satisfied with any spasmodic effort. There will be need of relief of a substantial character to aid the many thousands to prepare for the rigors of the coming winter. The magnificent public charities of that city, now paralyzed, can do little to this end. Those who live in homes of comfort and plenty must fur-

nish this help, or misery and suffering will be the fate of many thousands of our neighbors.

SAMUEL MERRILL, Governor.

DES MOINES, Oct. 10, 1871.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF OHIO.

CHICAGO, Oct. 12.

To the People of Ohio:

It is believed by the best informed citizens here that many thousands of the sufferers must be provided with the necessaries of life during the cold winter. Let the efforts to raise contributions be energetically pushed. Money, fuel, flour, pork, clothing, and other articles not perishable should be collected as rapidly as possible—especially money, fuel, and flour. Mr. Joseph Medill, of *The Tribune*, estimates the number of those who will need assistance at about 70,000.

R. B. HAYES, Governor of Ohio.

As great exigencies develop great men, and peculiar sorrows call forth the best elements of human nature, thus compensating men for labors and loss in some measure, glorifying mankind and bringing down God's richest blessings, so on the bosom of this mighty sea of trouble rose a light that brightened into perfect day, and the people of this and other countries put forth their energies to relieve distress and provide for the army of sufferers. No sooner was the melancholy news sent forth, than women began to cook, and night and day they filled their ovens with the best they could prepare, and sent it hot to the depots from whence it was conveyed to the desolate city. One man superintended the unloading of two hundred and fifty cars in four days, and this was but a moiety of the bounty. Everything that came seemed to be of the best quality, and the poor were never treated to such a feast. In the midst of all the terror, confusion, dust, and smoke, arrangements were extemporized for receiving and

disbursing supplies. The school buildings and saved church edifices were thrown open, and the citizens received the provisions and gave them out. Cushions were freely used for beds, and the poor homeless wanderers rested in God's sanctuaries. In the Second Baptist basement hundreds found good sleeping accommodations, and thousands were fed. While the outside public were so grandly generous, the sufferers found their more fortunate citizens absolutely unselfish and noble in their devotion and care. The loftier traits of Christian character shone forth conspicuous through the gloom. This was all the more marked, inasmuch as their own spared homes were exposed to fire every moment, or to pillage, until Sunday a week after the fire. Saturday the rain fell in copious showers, but even on that night the alarm was great, as may be gathered from the following description in one of the papers :

“The storm which swept over this city on Saturday night was the severest visitation of that character which we have encountered this season. Early in the evening a pretty stiff breeze blew from south-south-west. As the hours wore on, the wind veered around to the westward and gradually increased in strength. Toward midnight a perfect hurricane from the north-west prevailed. The reflection on the drifting storm-clouds of the burning coal along the docks struck terror to the hearts of the dwellers in the far-western portion of the city, who imagined that the glare was due to another outburst of the fire. Each house had its anxious watchers, who kept a steady look-out towards the east lest the fiery destroyer should stealthily approach and devour the dry remnant of the city. The solidity of those blocks which front bleak stretches of prairie was put to a severe test all through the night. No sleep came to quiet the unstrung nerves of the excited inmates, for the houses and everything about them rocked and rattled as if from the action of an earthquake. As morning approached the storm began to abate in violence, and

the terrible light of the sky gradually faded away. When day broke full and clear, the wind had almost entirely subsided, to the intense gratification of weary sentinels.

"It was most fortunate that no incipient fires made their appearance in any distant portion of the West Division. It is terrible even to imagine the result of such a calamity, with water so scarce and a frightful storm raging. No power on earth could have saved us from utter annihilation. Happily but slight damage was done on land by the wind, though what disasters followed on the lake is not yet definitely known. It is feared that marine casualties have been numerous. Several dangerous walls among the south-side ruins were blown down during the night. Beyond the demolition of the frail steeple of the San Francisco church, on the corner of Twelfth street and Newberry avenue, which fell with a loud crash about midnight, nothing serious occurred on the west side."

Sunday was a day of perfect loveliness, and the people gathered in multitudes

UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE SANCTUARY.

"Those places of worship in the South Division which escaped the sad fate of so many of the finest monuments to architectural skill in the city, were crowded to overflowing during the services yesterday morning. A hundred uncovered heads could have been seen on the sidewalks fronting the few remaining churches which rear their spires heavenward in that blighted section. At the hour for the services to commence it was impossible to gain entrance to the auditoriums, and late-comers had to content themselves with what they could see and hear through open doors and windows.

"Those long lines of fashionably-attired Christians who were wont to exhibit themselves on the avenues on other Sabbath

mornings were not visible yesterday. The raiment of the church-goers was as subdued as their feelings. Earnest, thankful prayer substituted itself for ostentatious display, and reverential attention for the thoughtless demeanor of other times. The services at the churches were of a dual character—sorrowful and joyful—sorrow for the unparalleled disasters of the past eventful week, and joy that so much of this great city has been spared from the fury of the flames. The sermons were based on the most appropriate texts, and in the great majority of instances were brimful of sound wisdom and practical suggestions to the troubled people.

“The congregations of some of the devastated churches assembled on the still smoking bricks, and offered up fervent thanks for the preservation of their lives and homes.

“Many an eye was dimmed with tears as little incidents in former Sabbath meetings were recalled to point out more forcibly the vast differences between now and then. The most impressive of those gatherings was that held on the ruins of Dr. Ryder’s church. A large number were present, and were visibly affected.

“Mr. Cheney preached at Grace Church to a large congregation, composed of his own parishioners and outsiders unchurched by the fire. His topic was of course the lesson of the great calamity. He inculcated patience, hope, and charity, but most especially economy. We must, for a long time to come, dress plainly, live coarsely, and be generous to the very extreme of our means.

“The discourse was eloquent and abounded in practical suggestions.

“The goodly number of the Church of the Unity, Rev. Robert Collyer, met on the ruins of their late beautiful temple. The ladies and gentlemen were not fashionably dressed, and some of them not even comfortably, considering the fresh wind that blew in from the prairies upon them. The pastor stood in front of the arch of entrance, upon an ornamental stone fallen from the

cornice. His congregation gathered in a semicircle in front of him. The scene was like a convention of early Christians in the Catacombs. Words of significance were read from Isaiah 54th and 65th. Then the congregation sang the 100th psalm, 'Before Jehovah's awful throne,' the pastor lining it. The hymn sung was, 'Awake our souls, away our fears.' The sermon was a tearful effort to be courageous under overshadowing discouragements. He only hovered on the edges of the great subject uppermost in everybody's mind. The speaker said that he had been trying to find some altitude of soul, some height of sentiment from which he could look down and thank God for what had occurred. At some future time he might be able to accomplish it. He could not thank God now. The sorrow was too near. After this expression, the speaker enumerated the few things which were left to be thankful for, and expressed the opinion that a more glorious future for the church and the congregation might arise from this dreadful past. He said that he should stay with his people through their bitter trial, and consider any offer of a position elsewhere not exactly as an insult, but as something resembling it.

"A list of the insurances on the edifice was read. It amounted to \$105,000, of which at least \$75,000 will be recovered. A place of meeting will be at once obtained, and regular Sabbath services will be held in the future.

"St. James's Church is one of the historical edifices of the city. It has also been noted for benevolence, as much as twenty or thirty thousand dollars having in single instances been collected at its Sunday services. Services were held yesterday at the ruins, the pastor, Mr. Thompson, officiating, and the attendance being good. The excellent choir furnished the music without organ accompaniment. The sermon was brief and delivered in a faltering voice to weeping, broken-hearted auditors. At a meeting of the vestry, immediately succeeding the service, Hon. I. N. Arnold

made a brief address, speaking of what the church had done for others, and saying that outside aid in rebuilding would be gratefully received. A committee of five were appointed to attend to immediate and necessary business."

R. L. COLLIER said :—

"I have been busy in a more sacred ministry than that of arranging precise and careful thoughts for this occasion. I have thrown together this morning such reflections as have come to me. I thank God that our church still stands, and hope it will morally stand far more than ever before.

"I have heard not a little speculation about the moral significance of our great calamity, and men who meant better have unwittingly accused God of a great wickedness when they have intimated that it was a judgment of Heaven because of the ungodliness of our city.

"1. First of all, judgments of Heaven are never retrospective, but always prospective—that is, they are never of the backward glance, but always of the forward. This calamity, as all calamities, has a meaning, and its purpose is to work out God's unchanging will and beneficent design. The individual and temporary good or ill that may come of it will depend wholly upon the spirit with which we receive it.

"The chief element visible to our eyes by which the fire was brought about was the great drought. There has not occurred a great fall of rain for more than two years, and the whole region is a tinder-box. Our city of shanties and sheds was in a fit condition for the mingled furies of flame and wind.

"As to the fire being a judgment, in the sense of a punishment from Heaven because of the sinfulness of the people, I remark :

"God's way is otherwise. He disciplines without destroying, and builds up without pulling down. No such punishment could

possibly do any good if it were only received as a wilful infliction of the rod of Heaven.

"2. Then there was no reason why Chicago should have been made an example for the rest of the world. Of course, we were a people of great worldliness and selfishness, of great boasting and parade; but certainly no city of the Christian world has ever done more, according to its means, for schools, churches, and charities.

"The poor have been systematically provided for, and freely educated in school and church. There have been from the first saintly men and women whose cry has gone up to God, and he has heard them.

"3. The judgment is meant to look *forward*, not *backward*.

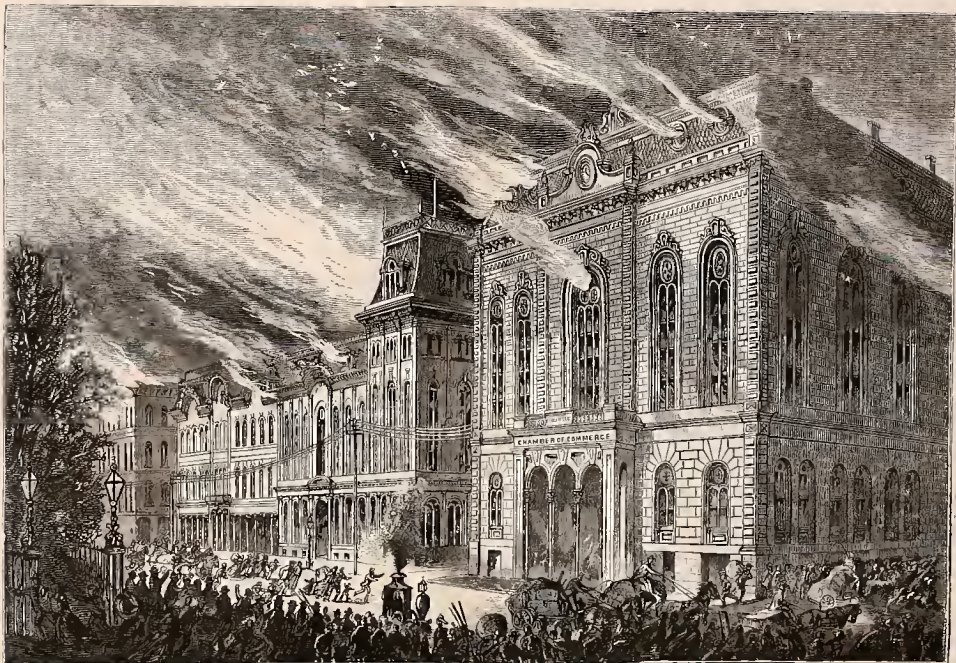
"We have chiefly magnified the rights of individuals rather than of society. We have been shockingly short-sighted, in the boundaries of our fire limits, in permitting so many or any wooden buildings within the limits of the city, and to-day the fire limits should be the city limits.

"We have given full sway to drinking, gambling, and licentious houses, and have by our moral laxity invited to the city, and harbored in it a criminal population almost equal to that of London, which is the worst on the face of the earth.

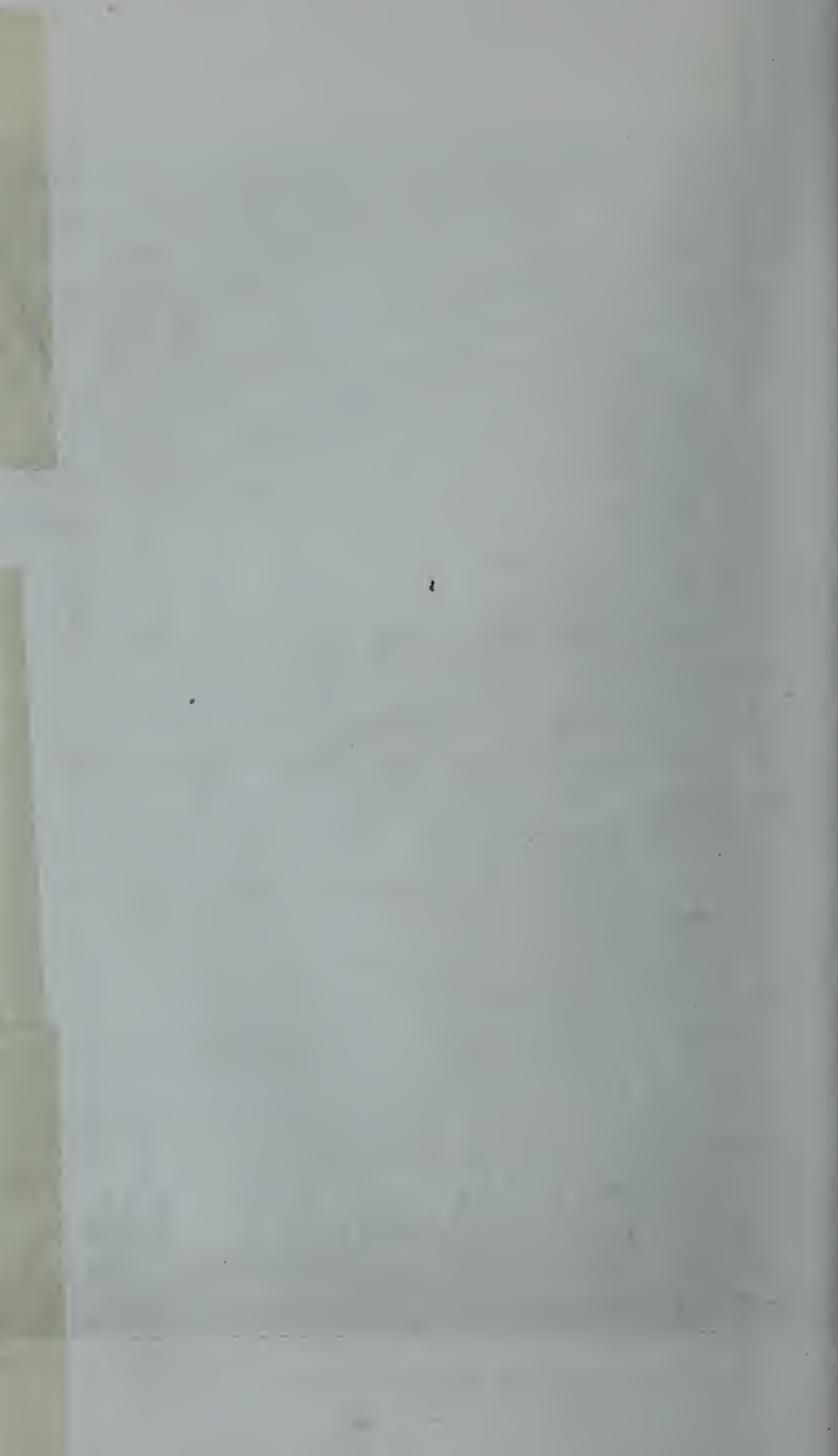
"We have thus done less to reform this very population, when in our power, than almost any other city. Our Bridewell and jail have cried aloud to heaven for help and redress.

"We have had the experience of the whole world back of us, and yet, in building a great city and centre of civilization, we have given the work into the hands of greedy real estate speculators, and have selfishly taken care of our own concerns.

"We have drifted, too, into the hands of a set of tricky politicians, the spirit of which is illustrated by our present City Council, and the only recognized aristocracy of the city is a set of ignorant and recently enriched social swells and snobs.



BURNING OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.



"Now, I say the judgment of our calamity is to teach us to cure these evils. We must learn, shortly, economy in our homes and business management. I am not hoping to see again such elegant residences and business blocks—I certainly never desire to. Europe knows better than we in these matters. Let our civic buildings and monuments, our school buildings and churches, our public libraries in each section of the city, our colleges of the learned professions, be grand and impressive as may be. In these we can illustrate our genius for beauty and sacrifice. When our business and domestic expenses are less, we can have more to give to public uses.

"What is lost?

"1. Our houses. Thousands of families are houseless and penniless.

"2. Our business. This is temporary.

"3. Our money. This is a great misfortune, but one which we can repair.

"We have not lost—

"1. Our geography. Nature called the lakes, the forest, the prairies together in convention long before we were born, and they decided that on this spot a great city should be built—the railroads and energetic men have aided to fulfill the prophecy.

"2. We have not lost our men—noble, generous, and of genius.

"3. We have not lost our hope. This city is to be at once rebuilt, and the glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former.

"Our duty.—We are in the poetry of the fire as yet. There is a dreamy, hazy romance about it. Stern reality will come to us more and more all winter. The temptation will be to greater selfishness on the part of those who have anything left. We must share to the last cent with the needy. Keep courage

up, and give to others. Our churches must go on, and in them we must work as never before.

“God is on our side, and has left us something to do, something to hope for, something to love.”

Here we may introduce the magnificent appeal made in Boston by Rev. E. E. Hale, at a meeting of citizens held to consider our calamity.

Rev. E. E. Hale being introduced by the Mayor, spoke substantially as follows :

“MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN :—It is but a single word that I have to say here. I have simply to remind you that this is no mere matter of voting in which we are engaged. I have to remind you that these people, our people in Chicago, by their munificence, by their generosity, by their strength, by their public spirit, have made us debtors to them all. [Applause]. There is not a man here the beef upon whose table yesterday was not the cheaper to him because these people laid out that world-renowned and wonderful system of stock-yards. [Applause]. There is not a man here the bread upon whose table to-day is not cheaper because these people, in the very beginning of their national existence, invented and created that marvellous system for the delivery of grain which is the model and pattern of the world. [Applause]. And remember that they were in a position where they might have said they held a monopoly. They commanded the only harbor for the shipping of the five greatest States of America and the world, and in that position they have devoted themselves now for a generation to the steady improvement, by every method in their power, of the means by which they were going to answer the daily prayer of every child to God when praying that He will give us our daily bread, through their enterprise and their struggles. We call it their misfortune. It is our misfortune. We are all, as it has been said, linked together

in a solidarity of the nation. Their loss is no more theirs than it is ours in this great campaign of peace in which we are engaged. There has fallen by this calamity one of our noblest fortresses. Its garrison is without munitions. It is for us at this instant to reconstruct that fortress, and to see that its garrison are as well placed as they were before in our service. Undoubtedly it is a great enterprise; but we can trust them for that. We are all fond of speaking of the miracle by which there in the desert there was created this great city. The rod of some prophet, you say, struck it, and this city flowed from the rock. Who was the prophet? what was the rock? It was the American people who determined that that city should be there, and that it should rightly and wisely, and in the best way, distribute the food to a world. [Applause]. The American people has that duty to discharge again. I know that these numbers are large numbers. I know that when we read in the newspapers of the destruction of a hundred millions of property those figures are so large that we can hardly comprehend them. But the providence of God has taught us to deal with larger figures than these, and when, not many years ago, it became necessary for this country in every year to spend not a hundred millions, not a thousand millions, but more than a thousand millions of dollars in a great enterprise which God gave this country in the duty of war, this country met its obligation. And now that in a single year we have to reconstruct one of the fortresses of peace, I do not fear that this country will be backward in its duty. It has been truly said that the first duty of all of us is, that the noble pioneers in the duty that God has placed in their hands, who are burned and suffering, shall have food; that by telegraph and railroad they shall know that we are rushing to their relief; that their homeless shall be under shelter, and their naked clothed; that those who for these forty-eight hours have felt as if they were deserted, should know that they have friends everywhere in God's world. [Applause]. Mr.

President, as God is pleased to order this world there is no partial evil but from that partial evil is reached the universal good. The fires which our friends have seen sweeping in their western horizon over the plains in the desolate autumn, only bring forth the blossoms and richness of the next spring and next summer.

“I can well believe that on that terrible night of Sunday, and all through the horrors of Monday, as those noble people, as those gallant workmen, threw upon the flames the water that their noble works—the noblest that America has seen—enabled them to hurl upon the enemy, that they must have imagined that their work was fruitless, that it was lost toil, to see those streams of water playing into the molten mass, and melt into steam and rise innocuous to the heavens. It may well have seemed that their work was wasted; but it is sure that evil shall work out its own end, and the mists that rose from the conflagration were gathered together for the magnificent tempest of last night, which, falling upon those burning streets, has made Chicago a habitable city to-day. [Applause]. See that the lesson for this community, see that the lesson for us who are here, that the horror and tears with which we read the despatches of yesterday, shall send us out to do ministries of truth and bounty and benevolence to-day. [Applause].”

It was in this spirit that men everywhere looked upon the woful disaster and its relation to other communities, and a more appreciative people never lived than the Chicagoans, who poured out their thankfulness to God and implored His divinest blessings on the benevolent self-sacrificing public. All jealousies seemed buried and forgotten, and our great rivals—Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Cincinnati—were profuse and generous beyond precedent in their donations for our benefit. Engines were despatched, provisions and money flowed forth from their noble marts, and thus our sorrow and burden became theirs, and we

were brothers in distress. The feelings of her citizens were well expressed in the *Tribune*, which said :

“ Amid the general gloom, the public distress, and the widespread wreck of private property, the heart of the most impoverished man is warmed and lightened by the universal sympathy and aid of his fellow-countrymen. There were cities that looked upon Chicago as a rival. Her unexampled success had provoked hostility,—amounting at times to bitterness. In the ranks of municipalities Chicago stood pre-eminent, and that eminence had drawn upon her the prejudices, and often the ill-natured jealousies of her supposed rivals. But the fire ended all this. Hardly had the news reached those cities before our sorrows were made theirs. The noble-hearted people did not wait for details ; they suspended all other business, each man giving of his money and his property to be sent to Chicago. Before the fire had ceased its ravages, trains laden with supplies of food and clothing had actually reached the city. St. Louis and Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Louisville were active, even while the fire was burning, in providing for the relief of devastated Chicago. Every semblance of rivalry had disappeared. Not an ungenerous or selfish thought was uttered—everywhere the great brotherhood of man was vindicated, and our loss was made the loss of the nation.

“ In the light of this experience, how absurd are the criminations and controversies of men. The hospitality and humanity of those in our city who have retained their homes, toward their less fortunate neighbors, though marked by every feature of unselfish charity, has failed even to equal the zealous efforts and generous actions of the people of the country, who have laid aside all other business to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and give shelter to the roofless of Chicago.

“ The national sympathy for us in our distress has shown that in the presence of human suffering there are no geographical

lines, no sectional boundaries, no distinction of politics or creeds. The Samaritans have outlived the Levites, and there has been no such thing as passing by on the other side. The wine and oil have been distributed with a lavish hand, and the moneys have been deposited to pay for the lodging of the bruised and homeless.

“Words fail to express the grateful feelings of our people. Men who braved the perils of the dreadful Monday, who witnessed the destruction of all their worldly goods, and who with their families struggled for life upon the prairies during the awful destruction, and bravely endured it all, could not restrain the swelling heart or grateful tears when they read what the noble people of the country had done for Chicago; how the rich and the poor, whites and blacks, all—men, women, and children—had done something to alleviate the distress and mitigate the suffering of fellow-beings in far-off Chicago. How true it is that ‘one touch of pity makes the whole world kin.’ In some cities the contributions have exceeded an average of a dollar for each member of the population, and in the abundance that has been given unto us the aggregate is largely made up from the prompt offerings of the humble and the poor as well as of the rich. Future statisticians may compute in tabular array the commercial value of the donations to Chicago; but only in the volume of the recording angel will be known the inestimable blessings of that merciful, generous, humane charity which this calamity has kindled in the hearts of the whole American people.

“In due time there will be a formal and complete acknowledgment of donations, public and private; but in the meantime let the nation rejoice that underneath all the conflicts in which men are forever engrossed there is a latent spark of universal brotherhood, which needs but the occasion to develop into the most genial warmth. Property may be lost, wealth may be obliterated, but that people must be great who have hearts in which

charity for human suffering cannot be stifled under any possible event."

Early in the period of want the more notable contributions were as follows:—

A. T. Stewart, of New York, \$50,000; City of Brooklyn, \$100,000; New York Board of Trade, \$13,000; Gold Room, \$7,000; Corn Exchange, \$28,000; Produce Exchange \$5,000; Stock Board, \$50,000; A. Belmont, Brown Brothers, Jessup & Co., and Duncan, Sherman & Co., of New York, \$5,000 each; Fisk & Hall, \$10,000; District of Columbia, \$100,000; W. W. Corcoran, Washington, \$3,000; President Grant, \$1,000; Philadelphia Commercial Exchange, \$10,000; Rochester, N. Y., \$70,000; Troy (N. Y.) Board of Trade, \$10,000; London, Canada, \$5,000; Hamilton, Canada, \$5,000; Montreal, \$20,000; Springfield, Mass., \$15,000; Pittsfield, \$5,000; Holyoke, \$2,000; Albany (N. Y.) Board of Lumber Dealers, \$6,000; Buffalo, N. Y., \$100,000; Elmira, \$10,000; Syracuse, \$31,000; Niagara Falls, \$10,000; City of Baltimore, \$100,000, besides private subscriptions of \$10,000; Robert Bonner, New York, \$50,000; Spragues, of Providence, R. I., \$10,000; Cincinnati Elastic Sponge Co., of Cincinnati, 100 sponge mattresses; the newsboys and bootblacks of Cincinnati, the proceeds of two days' labor; the Jane Coombs' Comedy Company, the proceeds of entertainment; Carl Pretzel, the proceeds of a lecture; every one in the Interior Department, one day's wages; Washington hackmen, one day's fares; Stone, of the *New York Journal of Commerce*, \$5,000; Peoria, \$75,000, and much food; Utica, \$20,000; Worcester, \$50,000; Toronto, \$10,000; St. Joseph, Mo., \$8,000; New York City, in all up to October 11, \$450,000, and immense quantities of provisions, clothing, etc.; Liverpool, cargoes of provisions; J. S. Morgan & Co., London, \$5,000; Dayton, \$20,000; Lawrence, Kan., \$13,000; New York dry goods houses, \$20,000; Indianapolis, \$75,000, and much provisions;

Louisville, \$70,000 in public and private subscriptions, and much besides; St. Louis, \$300,000, and unlimited quantities of provisions, etc.; Cincinnati, \$200,000, and much of every needful thing; Milwaukee the first to help us; Berkeley street, Boston, \$10,000; Baltimore Episcopal Convention, \$2,000; Baltimore Corn Exchange, \$7,000; Albany City, \$12,000; Memphis, \$40,000; Mr. Shaw, of Pittsburgh, \$5,000; other private subscriptions at Pittsburgh, \$40,000; Kansas City, \$26,000; Tennessee Legislature, \$5,000; Evansville, \$16,000; Boston Hide and Leather Exchange, \$10,000.

Herewith come the munificent offerings of foreign countries:

The Common Council of London unanimously agreed to forward 1,000 guineas immediately to the Mayor of Chicago. Appropriate resolutions of sympathy were passed.

The Lord Mayor received contributions from private individuals of upward of £7,000 sterling.

Baring, Morgan, Rothschild, Brown, Shipley & Co., of London, the Great Western Railroad of Canada, and the Grand Trunk Railroad, subscribed £1,000 each. The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce voted £5,000. The American Chamber contributed \$13,000. Mass meetings to secure further aid were held all over England.

The Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce unanimously requested the calling of a meeting to organize relief.

A committee of the chief merchants of Southampton have opened subscriptions, and called upon the citizens generally to contribute.

At Berlin, the President of the Police heads the lists for the relief fund.

At Frankfort-on-the-Main, the leading banks and merchants took active interest in the relief movement in securing subscriptions.

In the world's history there was never such an outpouring, so

spontaneous and immense—not one more sincerely appreciated. All these actual gifts were heaped upon us in the day of adversity, and at the same time banks and insurance companies proffered sympathy and cheering words. So vast were the losses that nobody thought securities of any value, and were ready to sell out their policies for five or ten cents on a dollar. Gradually the mists rolled away, and better tidings came, which served to brace up and sustain the flagging spirits of men who had lost great sums or little. Men spoke bravely to each other and gave assuring views of the future of Chicago. Thousands fled from the doomed city to towns in the vicinity, giving up all, and removed to their former homes. Indeed they could do nothing else, as they were little better than beggars. The majority began to look about them for new business places, or for sites for homes, for work, and opportunities of recovering their losses. It was felt that the importance of the city in a commercial view had not been over-estimated, and that business must seek this centre, and men live here. If the men who are here, and have lost, do not seize the opportunity, others will pluck the golden fruit, for a great city must rise on these ruins. Slowly but steadily the tide of hope rose, till the volume bore all upon its bosom, and every one set to work to remove the débris and rebuild their fortunes. In their confidence they began to suggest preparations against a recurrence of another similar disaster. Gross errors were brought to light by the searching element, which tried every man's work of what sort it was. The architecture of the Post-Office and Custom-House building, which, proving to be a sham and a fraud of the worst kind, has involved the loss of an immense sum of money.

The vault in the Sub-Treasury office, in which Collector McClean had deposited all the funds pertaining to his department, was built upon the second story. It rested upon two iron pillars built from the basement, with two iron girders of great

strength and weight connected with the wall. A third girder connected the two pillars, forming a framework. A heavy fire-proof vault was built upon this foundation, and proved to be about the weakest in the city to resist the fierceness of the fire. There were in the vault at the time of the fire \$1,500,000 in greenbacks, \$300,000 in National Bank notes, \$225,000 in gold, and \$5,000 in silver; making a total of \$2,030,000, of which \$230,000 was in specie.

In an old iron safe which was left outside the vault was deposited \$35,000, consisting of mutilated bills and fractional currency. This safe was regarded with scorn and deemed unworthy a place in the vault. But like the little fishes in the net, its insignificance saved it. When the building caught fire, and blazed with fervent heat, the miserable iron pillars melted, and the immense vault, with its fabulous treasures, fell to the basement, burying the insignificant safe and its mutilated contents. The consequence was that the contents of the latter were saved, while \$1,800,000 in currency was burned to ashes and hopelessly lost.

The specie was scattered over the basement floor and fused with the heat. There are lumps of fused eagles valued at from \$500 to \$1,000, blackened and burned, but nevertheless good as refined gold. The employés have been compelled to rake the ruins of the whole building, and have recovered altogether about five-sixths of the whole amount. It is probable that many days will pass before they will be able to find the remainder.

It is a fortunate circumstance that only a week ago \$500,000 in gold, and \$25,000 in silver, had been shipped from the city.

The building was, as before stated, a fraud of the most bare-faced description, and consequently an everlasting disgrace to the country. That a vault containing treasure to the amount actually lost should be supported only on two iron pillars, which gave way and let it fall in ruins, and should yet make a boast of being fire-proof, is a piece of irony the most acute.

But this vault was only one of the frauds. The fire-proof doors of the Post-Office vault, in which were stored the records, proved frailer still. The hinges of the massive portals which were to protect the government records were only affixed to a single brick. When, therefore, the walls expanded with the heat, the sturdy doors fell out of their own weight, each hinge carrying with it the single brick to which it held, while the remainder of the wall was as firm as possible.

Of course all the records were hopelessly ruined.

This vault was fire and burglar proof. Experts are not the only persons who can judge of the value of a vault whose doors had such a feeble hold.

The building is one of a large number built in the same way ; and the condition of the lower vault suggests great weakness in those erected in other cities. It is probable that the Government will order an inspection of all existing vaults. The accompanying views upon the events of the time and the future Chicago were published, and deserve consideration and preservation. The unexpected fury of this fire must put in suspicion all precautions commonly used.

“The spirit displayed by the business men of this city in rebuilding is astonishing, and deserving of the highest praise after a calamity so terrible as the recent conflagration. That Chicago will rise again, and not only resume her old position, but become in time the first city on this continent, seems to me to be as certain as the perpetuation of our government and the increase of our population.

“It should be borne in mind at this time that there were certain defects in the plan of Chicago, arising from the rapidity of its construction, which seemed beyond remedy, except at enormous cost ; but now it is possible, by considering the subject in time, and taking advantage of the experience of other cities, to make such rearrangements as will make the plan

and accommodations of this city suitable for the metropolis of America.

“The present burnt district, on the south side, is, by universal consent, to become the centre of the city, and every consideration indicates that it should be so. Were the whole city to be laid out anew, the natural features of the country and the railroad communications would point to the south side as the centre. The business operations will commence here, and radiate, as heretofore, to the south, west, and north, but more to the south, owing to the fact that the communication is uninterrupted by natural obstacles. Into this centre hundreds of thousands of people will pour daily, coming from the residence portion of the city, the suburbs, and the whole country.

“There is always, in great cities, an immense amount of time lost in going to and from business, and in the absence of proper accommodations for doing business after the business centre is reached. Persons familiar with the city of New York understand this fully. Two or three hours of the day are consumed in travelling to and fro, and, owing to the crowds in the streets, the contracted markets and places of exchange, the time required to transact business is doubled and trebled.

“Now, the points which seem to me to be considered at this time and be fully provided for, are :

“1. The laying out of certain lines for steam communication from the centre of business to the suburbs, to be so arranged as not to obstruct the street travel, or be interrupted by it. This most essential element of a modern metropolis can never be secured or arranged for so well as at present.

“2. The arrangement of commodious and central depots for the great lines of railroads centering in the city.

“3. A commodious levee along the river for public docks, a grand market, and a grand plaza, where all can go without paying tribute. Instead of having buildings built close down to the

river bank, let there be an open space on each side of the river devoted to the above purposes.

"4. The great leading lines of business should be consolidated or concentrated on certain streets running north and south. There should be a financial centre, a dry goods centre, a hardware centre, etc.

"5. An open square for public meetings and out-door business. The Court-House square suggests itself at once. Let the Court-House go further south and leave the present square open.

"Let it be surrounded by banks, brokers' offices, etc., and there will be room for everybody. These suggestions are hurriedly thrown out, but they should be considered, and a committee representing all interests should be appointed to draw up a scheme by which these desirable results can be secured. In the rebuilding of the city these matters can all be arranged for the benefit of all.

"The business portion of Chicago had already become overcrowded with the street cars, omnibuses, other vehicles, and foot-passengers. The limit of capacity had almost been reached.

"You believe in Chicago's future, and a few minutes' reflection will convince any one that more space is needed for the future, and that concentration and co-operation on the part of business men is necessary to make the best use of the ground now available.

Very truly yours,

"D. C. HOUSTON,

"Major U. S. Engineers, Brevet Colonel, U. S. Army.

"CHICAGO, October 13, 1871."

The general prevailing opinion became so favorable to this view that temporary places were provided on city land for present use, in order that where permanent buildings should be erected they might be of the most substantial nature and enduring quality. This was strongly contended for in a leading editorial of the *Tribune*:

"The futility of locking the stable-door after the horse is stolen is proverbial. Equally futile would any suggestions as to the best preventive of fires seem after the city is burnt up. Any hints, therefore, which may be made on this subject, in these columns, must be taken as referring to the new Chicago which has already commenced to grow up from the ruins of the old Chicago. The cause which operated most fatally to render the catastrophe of Sunday night complete is a matter of no question among those who are acquainted with our city. It was the large area of inflammable buildings, lumber-yards, and other tinder-boxes with which the multitude of really noble buildings of central Chicago were surrounded. The magnificent piles of marble which lined our business streets, and of which we had begun to be so justly proud, had been seen and admired by so many visitors from abroad that the complete destruction with which these palaces of art met on that fatal night has excited, even outside of Chicago, no less astonishment than sorrow. Chicago had, up to within a very few years, the reputation of being the most wretchedly-built city of its size in America. The miles of marble stores and churches, and public buildings, through which the visitor of the last year or two has been driven in "doing" Chicago, have dissipated this unfavorable opinion of the outside world, and drawn to our city a great measure of credit for its business architecture. But this architecture had its weak points, and these have now been made painfully and vividly apparent.

"The fault of the fire, however, lies more with the public itself than with the architects. We have been too good-natured toward those who have, to save a few hundred dollars of their expenses, persistently kept in jeopardy the safety of the whole community by maintaining in the heart of the city great numbers of the most inflammable structures. It was the thousand or so of dry pine shanties and rookeries between the lake and the river and south of Monroe street which did the business for

Chicago on that terrible night. With these huddled around them, and emitting vast clouds of burning brands, which the hurricane forced into every cranny and through every window, the fine stone rows of the avenues and of the principal streets could no more resist the raging element than the chaff can resist the whirlwind. There may have been, and doubtless were, occasional weaknesses in the construction of the later-built stores and public edifices—a too fragile cornice, or windows too much exposed—but the fact that buildings, for which everything possible to architecture had been done to make them fire-proof, went with the rest, tells plainly that the only fault—the grand fault to which the general destructiveness is traceable—was in allowing the fire so much material on which to feed until it became too great for human power to resist. We had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in spasmodic efforts to exorcise the fire-fiend from our limits, and yet we were all the while furnishing him with the material and the space with which to organize for his deadly work. We had been industriously feeding him on the only rations whereon he could thrive.

“Let these rations be cut off from this time forward. One of the first duties which the Mayor and Common Council should attend to is the enactment and strict enforcement of a comprehensive ordinance for the protection of the city against all future general conflagrations. In the business quarter now devastated there must, of course, be some temporary structures thrown together for the accommodation of business until better quarters can be provided. But the permits for these should be strictly confined to a certain limit of time—say six months from this date. It should then be ordained by the Council that the fire limits, within which no frame building, lumber stack, or other inflammable structure shall be erected, shall be extended very considerably, so as to embrace all sections of the city which are now, or are likely to become, central. And the ordinance should

contain a rigid prohibition against roofs, facings, or cornices of wood, or of such flimsy material as to be easily penetrated or displaced.

“It should be ordained, further, for the encouragement of thorough building in all parts of the city, that no frame building or out-building, of no matter what dimensions, shall be erected within fifty feet of any brick, stone, or iron structure, and that all livery-stables, planing-mills, factories, foundries, shops, or other buildings, wherein furnaces, steam-boilers, or other machinery or apparatus requiring much fire, or endangering explosions, shall be built of brick, stone, or iron, and that no division walls therein shall be of wood.

“To these precautions should be added a system of water-basins, or low reservoirs, to be supplied with water, independent of the general pumping works—perhaps by direct inflow from the lake or river—perhaps from artesian wells. It will not take any extravagant outlay to obviate, by such means, the possibility of any such calamity in the future as the failure of the water supply while a conflagration is yet raging.

“Other precautions will doubtless suggest themselves to practical men on a careful examination of the subject. None should be omitted which are necessary to make Chicago the most indestructible city in the world. Our fire record has been hitherto—even before the late calamity—the worst in America. Let it be henceforth the best. We must not, while suffering the manifold curses of the great fire, lose any of the blessings, of which the greatest are unquestionably the lessons and the opportunity which it affords us for fortifying against future calamities of the kind. We cannot expect that we will not have our daily quota of half a dozen or more incipient fires. We cannot be sure that severe droughts will not come, followed by gales like that of last Sunday night. But we *can* take care that those exigencies, over which the city as a community has

no control, are guarded against by all the measures which *are* within our control. San Francisco has suffered grievously by fires, which raked her from west to east, leaving nothing but ruin in their track. She is subject, during a considerable period of every year, to both droughts and gales quite as severe as those which contributed to our present misfortune; but she is now able to defy them all, having, by the means similar to those which we have now suggested, secured a system of fire-proof buildings—fire-proof streets, we might say—which are not only the pride and trust of all her citizens, but the admiration of all visitors. It is important that the burnt district of Chicago be rebuilt as speedily as possible; but paramount to that and all else is the necessity that it be built permanently and well. Chicago must rise again; and not only must she rise, but *rise to stand* as long as the world revolves.”

If deep moral lessons could be conveyed and impressed by any calamity, it would certainly seem that this was the dispensation for such a schooling as men never got before. The North Division was thoroughly ruined, only Ogden’s house and the Grant Place M. E. church remaining. Here, on this burnt district, Pandemonium seemed to reign on Sundays; here were the breweries and distilleries. Hence the opposition to Sabbath laws. In the South Division all the brothels, gambling-hells, and theatres were swept clean, as with the besom of destruction.

All the monuments of human energy and skill were levelled and destroyed. Now, will men rage and thirst for riches as they have done, when at one fell swoop the fire demon has melted their idol? Will vice and crime riot as they have done, eating out the very vitality of the city? In the presence of death and woe will men forget the better part? How insignificant seemed man as we stood by the dead in the Morgue! Mere pailfuls of charred bones and flesh indicated the existence of those who but the day before were full of lusty life. Oh! helpless man, call upon God,

the living God. Here lay the body of a beautiful young girl, or perhaps two and twenty. This poor victim has a wealth of rich brown hair, and brown eyes; she is four feet in height, and possesses a handsome figure. She must in life have been exceedingly lovely. Not being burned at all, she suffocated in the smoke, as did many of the other victims whose remains were afterwards consumed by the flames. A father lying on his face was recognized by his motherless children as they looked upon his head. We turn from these sad relics of humanity to gaze on the wreck of wealth around us. No city can equal now the ruins of Chicago, not even Pompeii, much less Paris.

Tens of thousands have come in to view these remains of a once proud metropolis, to which no description is adequate. They are bleak and lonely. It is a phantom city.

The little one-story frame shanty, in the rear of which was the barn in which the fire originated, on De Koven street, stands to-day alone and uninjured. The flames swept around it on every side, igniting everything else, while that miserable structure stands—a monument of the place where the fire commenced.

Under the light of the sun, wandering among the ruins of a day, the beholder cannot dispel the illusion that he is the victim of some Aladdinic dream, and that he has been transported with the speed of light, by the genius of the lamp or ring, and set down among the ruins of the Titanic ages. Arabia Petra looks upon us from the stone walls of the Post-Office, and the Catacombs of Egypt stare at us from the embrasure-like windows of the Court-House wings. Cleopatra's Needle and the Tower of Babel find duplicates in the water-tower and the smoke-stacks of ruined factories. Tadmor of the desert, with its sandy tumuli, appears on every hand in the crumbling piles of brick and mortar; the walls of ancient Jerusalem arise in the ruins of the great Central and Rock Island depots, and the pillared ruins of Cairo and Alexandria in the roofless front of Honore Block. The puz-

zler Sphinx is doubly reproduced in the one-time green lions of Ross and Gossage; while the Parthenon, the Acropolis, and the gladiatorial arena of ancient Greece and Rome find their counterpart in the fire-built ruins of last week's palaces. Here all time is reproduced in a moment. The destroyer works by earthquake, by storm, by the attrition of the ages, and by fire. Time works slowly, and takes a thousand years in which to make an ornamental ruin; fire works with lightning speed, and sets before our eyes the ruins of a world in the compass of a single night.

A night of more grandeur can scarcely be imagined than that of our ruined city after nightfall. As far as the eye can reach to the north, east, and south, the smouldering flames, scarcely perceptible during the day, give just enough light to render indistinctly visible the ruined walls of the one-time busy palaces, teeming with life and traffic—now not even a fit abiding-place for bats and owls. Away in one direction appear the walls of a marble-front row on Wabash avenue, the spectre windows of which are lit up by the blazing ruins on the other side, looking like the fire-demon with a hundred burning eyes, crouching for a spring across the South Branch, to bring destruction on the remainder of the doomed city. Looking away through the iron stays of one of the few remaining bridges, to the northward, an immense heap of burning grain and coal lights up the background, against which everything is clear-cut and definite—a disjointed skeleton stretches its bare and bony arms toward heaven, as if chained in an attitude of supplication by the fire-fiend. Here and there blue, red, and green lights flit like spectres and hobgoblins over the graves of buried commerce. Ever and anon a falling wall pitches headlong to the earth with a heavy, deadened thud, like the drum-beat of the destroying angel, calling a rally of his sooty cohorts for a fresh and final charge. Against this threatening host a wall of stout hearts is the only thing opposed.

Soon all this scene will be changed and the ruins disappear. To some places a ruin is a God-send, as travellers find in the Old World. Here we want no such mournful mementoes, and the people say let us put away the doleful spectacle as soon as possible. The following suggestion is certainly original, and appeared in the journals :

“Chicago will be rebuilt. Nature designed this site for the great internal city of the world, and time will remove every trace of our present unparalleled calamity. When that time comes mankind will be incredulous as to our present greatness or losses. It is possible now to build a monument that will stand for ages. Let the safes which are rendered worthless by the fire be collected and piled into a pyramid in one of our public parks. It would be higher than the dome of the Court-House, and would be in the future the greatest curiosity of the city.

“The prevailing spirit of owners of real estate may be fairly indicated by the way in which a Vermonter, who had just arrived, viewed the situation. He was standing on Wabash avenue, in front of his particular pile of bricks, and thus manifested himself : ‘When I heard of it I thought I would come out and see about it. I made my money here, and I lost part of it *there* ; I’ve got some left, and by to-morrow night I’ll have a brick block started.’ This seemed to be the general sentiment, and the only regret was the inopportuneness of the season and the lack of skilled labor to carry on the immense amount of business necessary.”

God helps those who help themselves, and the world will lend their aid to us when they witness the determination with which our city rises again.

I saw the city's terror,
I heard the city's cry,
As a flame leaped out of her bosom
Up, up to the brazen sky !

And wilder rose the tumult,
And thicker the tidings came—
Chicago, queen of the cities,
Was a rolling sea of flame!

Yet higher rose the fury,
And louder the surges raved
(Thousands were saved but to suffer,
And hundreds never were saved),
Till out of the awful burning
A flash of lightning went,
As across to brave St. Louis
The prayer for succor was sent.

God bless thee, O true St. Louis!
So worthy thy royal name—
Back, back on the wing of the lightning
Thy answer of rescue came.
But alas! it could not enter
Through the horrible flame and heat,
For the fire had conquered the lightning
And sat in the Thunderer's seat!

God bless thee again, St. Louis!
For resting never then,
Thou calledst to all the cities
By lightning and steam and pen.
“Ho, ho, ye hundred sisters,
Stand forth in your bravest might!
Our sister in flame is falling,
Her children are dying to-night!”

And through the mighty republic
Thy summons went rolling on,
Till it rippled the seas of the Tropics
And ruffled the Oregon.
The distant Golden City
Called through her golden gates,
And quickly rung the answer
From the city of the Straits.

And the cities that sit in splendor
Along the Atlantic Sea,
Replying, called to the dwellers
Where the proud magnolias be.
From slumber the army started
At the far resounding call,
'Food for a hundred thousand,"
They shouted, "and tents for all."

I heard through next night's darkness
The trains go thundering by,
Till they stood where the fated city
Shone red in the brazen sky.
The rich gave their abundance,
The poor their willing hands ;
There was wine from all the vineyards,
There was corn from all the lands.

At daybreak over the prairies
Re-echoed the gladsome cry—
"Ho, look unto us, ye thousands,
Ye shall not hunger nor die !"
Their weeping was all the answer
That the famishing throng could give
To the million voices calling
"Look unto us, and live !"

Destruction wasted the city,
But the burning curse that came
Enkindled in all the people
Sweet charity's holy flame.
Then still to our God be glory !
I bless Him, through my tears,
That I live in the grandest nation
That hath stood in all the years.

Strangers perceive and acknowledge that this point is naturally designed for a great city, and the testimony of our sister

city St. Louis is a generous recognition of our geographical supremacy. Said the *Missouri Republican*:—"Chicago, though stricken in purse and person as no other city recorded in history ever has been, is not crushed out and destroyed, and her complete restoration to the place and power from which she is temporarily removed is only a question of time. It would be sad, indeed, if a conflagration, though swallowing up the last house and the last dollar of a great commercial metropolis, could fix the seal of perpetual annihilation upon it, and declare that the wealth and prosperity which once were should exist no more forever. Such might be the case, perhaps, were there none other save human forces at work; but into the composition of such a city as that which the demon of fire has conquered, enter the forces and the necessities of nature. Chicago did not become what she was, simply because shrewd capitalists and energetic business men so ordained it. That mighty Agent, who fashions suns and stars, and swings them aloft in the boundless ocean of space, marks out by immutable decree the channels along which population and trade must flow. When the first settlers landed at Jamestown and Plymouth, and began to hew a path for civilization through the primeval forest, it was as certain as the law of gravitation, that if this continent were destined to be a new empire, fit to receive the surplus millions of the eastern hemisphere, and contribute to the progress and enlightenment of mankind everywhere, there must and would be a few prominent centres, so to speak, around which the vast machine could revolve. Those centres were determined by the geography and topography of the country; and when the advancing tide of immigration touched them they began to develop as naturally and irresistibly as the flower does beneath the genial influences of sunshine and showers. For practical purposes neither Jamestown nor Plymouth were of any special consequence; therefore the one has ceased to exist altogether, and the other remains an

insignificant town. But the inner shore of Boston harbor, the island of Manhattan, the site of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, New Orleans, St. Louis, and San Francisco, furnished the required facilities, and we see the result to-day. Nature declares where great cities shall be built, and man simply obeys the orders of Nature.

“The spot where Chicago river empties into Lake Michigan belongs to the same category as those we have mentioned. It was designed and intended for the location of a grand mart to supply the wants of the extreme north-west—that portion of the central plateau lying on the line and to the north of the Union Pacific Railway, and the western part of the British possessions. The trade from these sections seeks an outlet there, and finds it better and more available than anywhere else. This fact was settled before the first brick was laid in Chicago; was settled when Chicago rose to the rank of the fifth city in the republic, and is settled just as firmly now, when, to all human appearances, her destruction is wellnigh accomplished.

“Natural advantages, then, must compel the reconstruction of Chicago, even though every foot of its soil passes out of the hands of the present proprietors. And if we examine what the fire has spared, it will be found that the nucleus of a new and rapid growth is not wanting. Nor more than twenty per cent. of the lumber supply has been consumed, thus affording ample material for building; the largest elevator and perhaps one or two of the smaller ones are safe; the stock yards are uninjured, and with these avenues for business open, business itself is sure to come speedily. Indeed, it is announced that several vessels received full loads of wheat from the elevators as early as Wednesday, and departed on their accustomed voyages to eastern ports. There is also good reason to believe that at least one-half the insurance will be paid, and as this cannot be much less than \$100,000,000, money will not be lacking. If we add to these

resources the railway lines converging to that point, which represent an aggregate capital of \$300,000,000, and remember that every railway is directly interested in the process of reconstruction, and will aid it in all possible ways, it may not be difficult for even the most incredulous to see why and how Chicago must grow again. That she is absolutely ruined or permanently disabled is a sheer impossibility which no sensible person will for a moment credit."

It may here serve to show that all is not lost, and to convey some impression of the extent of losses, to append the statement of liabilities and resources of insurance companies doing business in Chicago:—

NEW YORK CITY AND STATE.

<i>Companies.</i>	<i>Gross Assets.</i>	<i>Losses.</i>
Ætna, City.....	\$442,709	\$200,000
Adriatic, City.....	246,120	5,000
Agricultural, Watertown.....	550,843	.....
Albany, Albany.....	264,978	.....
Albany City, Albany.....	396,646	Suspended
American, P., City.....	741,405	25,000
American Exchange, City.....	277,350	15,000
Astor, City.....	405,571	500,000
Atlantic, City.....	556,179	250,000
Beekman, City.....	261,851	Suspended
Buffalo City, Buffalo.....	370,934	500,000
Buffalo Fire and Marine, Buffalo.....	473,577	500,000
Buffalo German, Buffalo.....	270,081	5,000
Capital City, Albany.....	293,766	.....
Citizens, P., City.....	684,798	25,000
Clinton, City.....	392,704	3,000
Columbia, City.....	451,332	3,000
Commerce, Albany.....	692,877	10,000
Commerce Fire, City.....	249,372	15,000
Commercial, City.....	306,002	5,000
Continental, P., City.....	2,538,038	800,000
Excelsior, City.....	335,744	Suspended
Exchange, City.....	183,959	.....
Firemen's, City.....	369,961	15,000
Firemen's Fund, City.....	173,477	100,000
Fireman's Trust, City.....	226,269	20,000
Fulton, City.....	363,002	Ad 700,000
Germania, City.....	1,077,849	225,000
Glenn's Falls, Glenn's Falls.....	571,123	10,000
Guardian, City.....	279,688	40,000
Hanover, P., City.....	700,335	225,000
Hoffman, City.....	235,242	10,000
Holland Purchase, Batavia.....	171,496	.....
Home, City.....	4,578,008	Ad 2,000,000
Howard, P., City.....	783,351	275,000
Humboldt, City.....	251,186	10,000

<i>Companies.</i>	<i>Gross Assets.</i>	<i>Losses.</i>
Importers' and Traders', City.....	\$302,589	\$22,500
International, City.....	1,329,476	400,000
Irving, City.....	321,745	Ref's risks
Jefferson, City.....	411,155	47,500
Kings County, City.....	262,573	30,000
Lafayette, L. I. City.....	214,751	7,500
Lamar, City.....	551,402	200,000
Lenox, City.....	240,801	30,000
Long Island, P., City.....	334,002	.....
Lorillard, City.....	1,715,909	800,000
Manhattan, City.....	1,407,788	500,000
Market, P., City.....	704,634	Susp'd.
Mechanics, L. I., City.....	218,047	22,500
Mechanics' and Traders, City.....	460,002	.....
Mercantile, City.....	273,399	100,000
Merchants', City.....	442,690	15,000
Nassau, L. I., City.....	391,518	.....
National, City.....	232,671	15,000
New Amsterdam, P., City.....	432,638	40,000
N. Y. Central, Union Sp'gs.....	201,864	.....
New York Fire, City.....	392,278	15,000
Niagara, City.....	1,304,567	225,000
North American, City.....	770,305	250,000
North River, City.....	467,426	.....
Pacific, City.....	443,557	12,500
Peter Cooper, City.....	295,724	.....
Phoenix, L. I., City.....	1,890,010	350,000
Relief, City.....	310,908	10,000
Republic, City.....	683,478	225,000
Resolute, City.....	252,452	75,000
Schenectady, Schenectady.....	93,737	Wound up.
Security, City.....	1,880,333	Ad. 1,000,000
Sterling, City.....	247,027	7,500
Tradesmen's, City.....	423,181	25,000
Washington, P., City.....	774,411	400,000
Williamsburgh City, City.....	539,692	70,000
Yonkers and N. Y. City.....	863,963	300,000
Western, of Buffalo.....	582,547	600,000

MASSACHUSETTS COMPANIES.

Eliot, Boston.....	672,212	12,000
Hide and Leather.....	419,000	700,000
Independent.....	646,000	Suspended.
Lawrence, Boston.....	262,502	12,000
Manufacturers'.....	1,480,464	350,000
Merchants'.....	958,000	10,000
National.....	821,844	500,000
People's, Worcester.....	887,750	300,000
New England Mut. Marine.....	1,030,973	700,000
Washington, Boston.....	935,975	25,000

OHIO COMPANIES.

Alemania, Cleveland.....	285,000	25,000
Andes, Cincinnati.....	1,203,000	300,000
Cleveland, Cleveland.....	530,000	175,000
Globe.....	178,143	25,000
Home, Columbus.....	637,947	150,000
Sun, Cleveland.....	301,340	75,000

MISSOURI COMPANIES.

<i>Companies.</i>	<i>Gross Assets.</i>	<i>Losses.</i>
American Central, St. Louis.....	\$254,875	\$350,000
Anchor.....	121,974	27,000
Boatmen's.....	51,788	20,000
Chouteau.....	21,808	25,000
Citizens'.....	271,000	25,000

CONNECTICUT COMPANIES.

Ætna, Hartford.....	5,762,635	2,000,000
City, Hartford.....	544,237	225,000
Charter Oak, Hartford.....	251,951	200,000
Connecticut, Hartford.....	405,069	Suspended.
Fairfield County, Norwalk.....	216,358	30,000
Hartford, Hartford.....	2,737,510	1,200,000
Merchants', Hartford.....	540,096	350,000
Phoenix, Hartford.....	1,717,947	700,000
Putnam, Hartford.....	785,788	425,000

RHODE ISLAND COMPANIES.

American.....	374,069	400,000
Atlantic.....	326,614	275,000
Hope.....	211,673	150,000
Merchants.....	372,199	13,000
Narraganset.....	792,947	33,000
Providence, Washington.....	415,149	550,000
Roger Williams.....	279,946	100,000

American, New Jersey.....	300,000	10,000
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Wheeling, West Virginia, pays in full. Sun, of Cleveland, will pay in full; Pacific, Peoples', Firemen's and Union Insurance Companies, of San Francisco, promise to pay in full; Baltimore Companies announce they will pay in full.

MAINE COMPANIES.

National, Bangor.....	\$241,000	\$17,500
Union, Bangor.....	421,000	5,000

MICHIGAN COMPANIES.

Detroit Fire and Marine.....	273,000	30,000
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WISCONSIN COMPANIES.

Brewers' Protective.....	183,681	75,000
N. W. National.....	191,202	90,000
St. Paul Fire and Marine.....	280,000	60,000
Aurora, Covington, Ky.....	163,000	35,000

FOREIGN COMPANIES.

Commercial Union.....	4,000,000	65,000
Imperial.....	5,438,665	150,000
Liverpool and London and Globe, Eng....	20,136,420	2,000,000
North British and Mercantile.....	4,104,593	2,000,000
Queen.....	2,347,495	Nothing
Royal.....	9,274,776	93,000

PENNSYLVANIA COMPANIES.

Franklin.....	3,087,000	500,000
Alps, Erie.....	265,524	12,000
Boatmen's, Pittsburgh.....		18,000
Eureka, Pittsburgh.....		18,000
Artesian.....		17,000

<i>Companies.</i>	<i>Gross Assets.</i>	<i>Losses.</i>
Allemania.....		18,000
Monongahela.....		12,000
Pittsburgh.....		10,000
Union.....		5,000
Western.....		5,000
Federal.....		7,500
Alleghany.....		2,500
Merchants' and Manufacturers'.....		6,000
Enterprise, Philadelphia.....	611,000	125,000
Insurance Company of North America.....	3,050,000	600,000

When steamboats or railway trains, for instance, for many years pursue their roads in safety, the awful crash of an accident becomes the exception, nor does it deter the travelling community from running the same risk with a feeling of comparative safety. In the first place, there seems to be no rule in fire insurances of the amount of risk taken as to the proportion of capital paid up or held. Thus, for instance, some of the very best offices have a liability of nearly forty times their capital.

The *Ætna* company gives her statement on the 1st of January, 1871: Gross assets, \$5,782,635; amount of risk on 1st of January, 1871, \$237,874,573; yet this office is perfectly able to meet its liabilities. The total capital of all the insurance companies in the United States is:—

In the State of New York, companies' assets....	\$53,722,665	41
Mutual companies in State of New York, assets..	2,575,077	36
Companies in other States, assets.....	23,171,101	00
Mutual companies in other States, assets.....	5,696,226	22

Total assets of fire insurance companies.... \$85,065,060 06

The amount of risk on the 31st of December, 1869, was:—

New York joint stock fire insurance companies.....	\$2,714,198,776	31
New York mutual fire insurance companies..	42,504,145	00
Companies from other States	1,740,650,887	97
Mutual fire insurance companies.....	33,748,782	41

Total amount of risk..... \$4,530,658,591 69

or twice the amount of the national debt, with assets of \$85,000,000.

Considering that for the last generation the insurance companies have really only been called upon twice to make good a loss of over \$10,000,000 at one time and in one place, viz., the fire in '35 and '45, we must confess that, as a general thing, fire insurance is a lucrative business, as there is no business that can do fifty times the amount of its investment in a year. The above figures do not include the foreign offices, which insure very heavily. The American branch of the London and Liverpool and Globe Insurance Company had, on December 31, 1869, \$90,936,126 fire risks, and the risks during the year written, besides this, was \$220,302,506, or a total of \$311,238,632.

These gigantic figures certainly remind one of the distance to some planetary body, or the amount of yards of cotton fabrics manufactured in Manchester, yet all of this immense property upon which the prosperity of a whole nation depends, has very justly been looked upon as safe and secure. It must, however, not be supposed that the surviving insurance companies will very long feel the loss sustained in Chicago, as it can easily be seen by our very figures, that the increase of premium, which some have already put in force, of only thirty per cent., will give the total corporations in the United States \$12,000,000 additional premiums, and consequently profits. The drygoods store in Maine, and the cotton-press in New Orleans, will alike be called upon to contribute to the loss of the insurance offices sustained by the Chicago fire.

On the week following the fire the National Banks resumed business as usual, and an immense number of men were again set to work, and hope animated all faces. The labor of removing rubbish and tottering walls seems Herculean to one riding over the streets along which the columns of flame rolled like swollen torrents of lava; but persistent skilful effort will soon accomplish wonders, and rear again the stately buildings and restore all the magnificence.

Fair she rose,
 Lifting high her stately head,
 Victor-crowned,
 Stretching strong and helpful hands
 Far around ;
 Full of lusty, throbbing life,
 In the strife
 Dealing quick and sturdy blows.

Sudden swept
 Through her streets a sea of fire ;
 Roaring came
 Seething waves, cinders, brands,
 All aflame ;
 Blood-red glowed the brazen sky ;
 Far and nigh
 Smoke in wreaths and eddies crept.

Oh ! the cries
 Shrill, heart-rending ! Oh ! the hands
 Frantic wrung !
 Oh ! the swaying buildings vast !
 Pen or tongue
 Ne'er the awful tale can tell,
 How they fell
 Underneath the dizzy skies.

.
 Low she lies,
 Bowed in dust her stately head,
 Desolate ;
 Yet by all her glory past,
 Let us wait,
 Stand beside her firm and true ;
 Built anew,
 Watch her, help her upward rise.

NARRATIVE OF REV. T. W. GOODSPEED, OF QUINCY, ILL., AN EYE-WITNESS.

THRILLING DESCRIPTION OF SCENES, INCIDENTS, ETC.

It being announced that Rev. T. W. Goodspeed, of the Vermont Street Church, who was present in Chicago at the time of the fire, and had witnessed many of its scenes and incidents, would give a narrative thereof at his church, an immense crowd was early in attendance, filling all the space in the building, while hundreds of others were unable to gain admittance. Mr. Goodspeed took no text, giving simply a narrative of what he saw. He commenced by saying:—

It was my fortune to be in Chicago when it was destroyed. I do not propose to give you a complete history of the conflagration. You are getting that from day to day through the newspapers. Many have said to me, "Tell us all you saw." This great calamity is in all hearts. We are not prepared to speak of or listen to anything else; and I have thought there was a sufficient reason for giving up this service to telling my congregation what I saw of this unparalleled conflagration. Sympathizing with this feeling, Mr. Priest has given up his service to be with us, as has also the congregation of the First Church. I fear you will be disappointed in listening to me, as I design to tell you only what came under my observation, and there were a thousand things I did not see.

The Chicago river runs directly west from the lake almost a mile. It then branches north and south. That part of the city lying south of the main river, and east of the South Branch, is called the South Side. That part lying north of the main river, and east of the North Branch, is the North Side, and all west of the two branches the West Side. Each of these divisions is about one-third of the city.

You are aware that the great fire of Saturday night, which destroyed several blocks, was on the West Side, near the South

Branch of the river. The fire of Sunday night and Monday began also on the West Side, near the scene of the other, destroying, with that, forty blocks on the West Side; swept across the South Branch, destroying a mile square of the South Side—the entire business portion of the city—crossed the river and laid in ruins almost the whole of the North Side, about 400 blocks.

Sunday evening I preached in the Second Baptist Church, which is nearly a mile west of the South Branch. We stopped in the study about half an hour after service, and started for my brother's home a few minutes after nine. It was then that we first saw the fire, a mile to the south-east. We continued to watch it from time to time till eleven o'clock, when, supposing it under control, we retired.

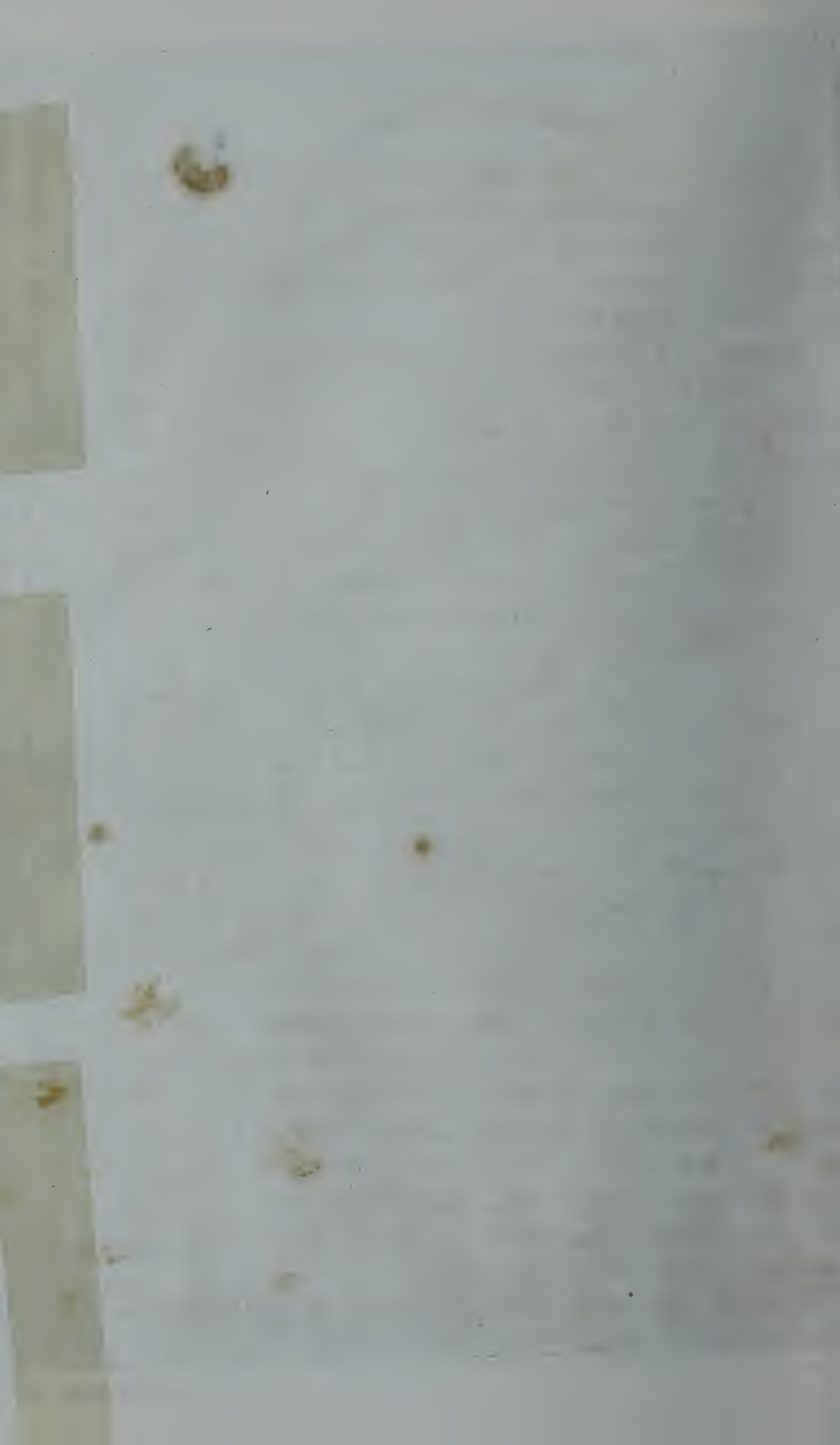
We were aroused a little before four in the morning. Hurrying on my clothes, I went out. The fire had got far up on the West Side of the South Branch, and had evidently crossed the river to the South Side, and was beyond all control. The wind was blowing fiercely from the south-west. The whole city was lighted up by the flames almost like day. As I hastened toward the river I noticed that the stars were all obscured as effectually as if the sun were shining, and the moon gave a feeble, sickly light. It was almost gray, altogether unlike itself.

As I proceeded the streets became more and more crowded. The whole West Side was gathering and crowding toward the river. I stopped to rouse my brother, but he had long been gone. A woman stopped me on Washington street and said, "My husband's place of business is destroyed, and we are ruined."

Reaching the river, I found that a large part of the South Side was still unharmed. Here I saw the massive blocks of the South Side in flames, and saw vessels being towed north to escape the fire. I followed the South Branch up to where it joined the North Branch and the main river, and looked down the latter to



BURNING OF THE CROSBY OPERA-HOUSE.



the lake. Three or four blocks away the fire had crossed the river. Wells Street Bridge was burning. The spectacle was grand and awful beyond description. Great billows of flame swept clean across the river, while countless myriads of sparks and burning brands filled the air.

Proceeding, I crossed the Kinsie Street Bridge to the North Side. Here I met the fugitives—thousands of people, indeed, were going both ways—spectators to see, fugitives to escape. The streets were filled with merchandise and furniture. Women were everywhere guarding their household goods. The air was filled with a thousand noises. The screaming of the steamers, the whistle of the tugs, the cries of children, the shouting of men, the howling of the wind, the roar of the flames, the crash of falling buildings.

I went on as far as Wells street, and the wind was here a hurricane. The buildings on Water street and the south bank of the river caught, and almost instantly they were one vast volcano, throwing up great volumes of flame that were caught up and carried bodily across the stream. The river seemed a boiling caldron. We stood under the great elevator at the Wells street depot and saw on one of them a man wetting the roof. He had hose, and must have saturated the entire building with water, yet within fifteen minutes the building was aflame. I returned to the West Side. The fleeing people were carrying off articles of every description. Two men were wheeling away the Indian figure that had stood before their cigar store. One man was hurrying off with two whiskey bottles. I stopped again to look down the main river toward the lake. The scene was even more magnificent and awful than before. This was indeed the grandest spectacle of all. The whole length of the river was then one broad sheet of fire.

With every fresh blast of wind great billows of fire would roll across toward the doomed North Side, as if filled with a mad

desire to sweep it away in ruin. Then for a moment they would subside and show the three bridges wreathed in flames (the water apparently boiling underneath them), the black walls of the buildings on either side, and here and there tongues of flames shooting out from doors and windows and roofs. Then again two walls of fire, extending a mile away to the lake, would flame up toward heaven for a moment, to be caught by the gale and tumbled in fiery ruin to the ground, or carried in great masses of fire to spread the conflagration. Going on from here I took my stand on Lake Street Bridge. The line of fire extended a mile or more down the South Branch. Several bridges had already been consumed. The great coal-yards were beginning to burn, and almost all the magnificent blocks of the South Side were in flames. From the slight elevation of the bridge, I could see almost two square miles of fire.

Looking toward the north-west, and seeing how directly toward the water-works the flames were rushing, it crossed my mind that they would be destroyed. I turned and hastened to my friend's house, a mile on the West Side, and immediately tried the water. I was too late, it would not run, and the great city of 300,000 people was without water.

Before seven o'clock I went to another friend's house and found him just returned from saving his books, and what merchandise he could. He had got into his place of business by the back way, and had been driven away by the swift demon of destruction. I went to another friend's house to inquire if his store was safe. He had visited the fire at half past-ten and gone home confident it was under control. At three he had tried to reach his business place, and been driven back by the fire that raged between him and it. I got into his buggy with him and we started to find it. Reaching Twelfth street, which runs across the South Branch, a mile and a quarter south of the Court-House we found the street crowded with people and vehicles, and all pressing to-

ward the South Side. It was a little after seven o'clock, and of course daylight. We made our way to Wells or La Salle street, and tried to go up, but the flames stopped us. We went on to Wabash avenue, and found it to be so crowded as to be utterly impassable. We crossed to Michigan avenue, fell into the stream of travel, and worked our way up to the Michigan Avenue Hotel. My friend asked me to hold his horse five minutes, while he went to see what he could find. Left to myself I had time to look about me. I despair of describing the scene to you. It beggars description. It was here that my friend Sawyer, who is with me in the desk, joined me. His clothes covered with dust, his hair filled with dust and cinders, his eyes red from smoke, his face black, so unlike himself that I hardly knew him. Michigan avenue was burning from within a block of where we stood a mile away to the river. The magnificent residences and great business houses were going up in flames and down in blackness before our eyes. Great volumes of smoke rolling away before the gale concealed the North Side from view. But at every break or lift of the smoke, the great Central Depot could be seen all in flames. The fire was creeping away out on the piers, and had reached one of the immense elevators that stood near its end, and the flames were soon reaching up one hundred and fifty feet into the air. Every moment we expected to see the great Central Elevator, standing very near the burning one, fall before the conflagration that had devoured everything else in its path. But the wind seemed to veer suddenly to the south, and remained there an hour, and the great elevator was saved; with one exception, the only one on the South Side north of the line of fire. A steamer had reached the mouth of the river, but here the fire caught her, and I saw it run from one end to the other in little lines of light, and so over the rigging till the ship was all ablaze.

Meantime I was in the midst of the wildest confusion I had ever witnessed. The open space between Michigan avenue and

the lake was filled with every variety of household goods and merchandise. There must have been the furniture of a thousand families crowded into this narrow space. Rich and poor, white and black, were together. Over every pile of goods stood some one to guard it. Meantime other fugitives were every moment crowding into the already overcrowded space, and seeking room for their goods as well. Thousands of people pressed along the walks and filled the open spaces—some coming to see and others fleeing. The avenue was for hours one solid mass of teams. Up and down the street they pressed endlessly, going up empty and returning full. At length the press became so great that the street was completely blockaded, and the police began to turn the still on-coming multitude of vehicles backward. They chose the spot where I stood to accomplish this. Then began cursing and shouting; the teamsters insisting that they must go on, every one of them having valuable property just ahead; and the police insisting that to save men's lives they must turn back. The more determined teamsters went through in spite of the police, who were strangely inefficient. The more timid or reasonable tried to turn back in a street where there was hardly room to move forward. One backed into my buggy wheels as I crowded the sidewalk and waited; another ran into one of the shafts. Twenty feet ahead of me a horse tried to run away, starting directly toward me. He ran about ten feet and smashed two buggies. A rod to my left a driver ran against a buggy wheel and crushed it, regardless of the other's load. I grew more and more nervous, expecting every moment to have the horse and buggy ruined. Two hours and a half passed and still I waited. I had plenty of time to look about me.

Every variety of vehicle passed me, loaded with every variety of article. I saw one of our former citizens, Mr. Pearson, carrying one end of a long glass case filled with his goods—hair done up in many forms. A dozen or twenty cows picked their way

among the wagons. A woman found her way across the street, when there chanced to be an opening, leading a great black dog. The confusion was beyond all description. Up and down the Michigan Central track locomotives were constantly moving, drawing heavy trains, or alone, and, it seemed to me, blowing their unearthly whistles all the time. The fire-engines, a block away, added theirs, which were worse still. The voices of the police calling to the teamsters, the responses and often curses of the drivers, their impatient yells to one another, the cry of distressed citizens to the expressmen, the voices of the crowd, the roaring of the gale, the howling of the conflagration, the crackling of burning houses, the crash of falling walls, the ringing of bells, the shouts that greeted some new freak of the flames, and suddenly the sullen thunder that told us buildings were being blown up only a block away. The conflagration of the great day will hardly bring a confusion worse confounded.

The fire still made progress towards me until the people in all the houses above and below me removed their goods and fled. Again came the thundering and shaking of the earth that accompanied the blowing up of a building. It seemed ominously near. I could see the fire on the Wabash Avenue Methodist Church, and was sure it was going, and that was behind me. At length the vast crowd, men and teams, precipitated themselves down the avenue like a falling avalanche, and the cry went up that the building on the corner just above us was to be blown up. Waiting no longer I joined the fleeing multitude and made my way as fast as possible a block farther away. After three hours my friend returned; his coat gone; his face so black and his eyes so nearly put out, that, for a moment, I did not know him. He took his horse, to my great relief, and I proceeded up the Avenue toward the Central Depot, to see what good I could do. On beyond Terrace Row I went, and had the whole horrible scene before me. Not long, however, could I see it. The magnificent

Terrace Row was in flames, and the air was filled with smoke, and dust, and cinders, and live coals, and faggots of fire. The middle of this great row fell first, the ends following, covered in one black cloud of smoke, and ashes, and dust. It was almost past endurance.

Meanwhile the inflammable material in this narrow space caught fire in a hundred places. Beds, pillows, quilts, carpets, sofas, pianos, furniture, and it seemed to me that everything must be burned. With a small tea-chest I spent hours bringing water from the lake, helping to extinguish numberless incipient fires which broke out continually among the heaps of goods. I returned home at 3 P.M., having had nothing to eat since 6 o'clock Sunday evening. Helping to carry a mirror up stairs, I asked a woman on the way down to give me a drink from a full pail she carried, and she refused. In the evening, Monday evening, I took my station in the cupola of a four-story building to view the fire and watch, and for hours witnessed a scene which no language can describe.

Mr. Goodspeed visited the scene of the fire the next day and described many interesting scenes which he witnessed, most of which have become familiar to our readers. We regret that our space only allows of the foregoing imperfect synopsis of the address, but we must make room for the following thrilling incident:—

While Madison street, west of Dearborn, and the west side of Dearborn were all ablaze, the spectators saw the lurid light appear in the rear windows of Speed's Block. Presently a man, who had apparently taken time to dress himself leisurely, appeared on the extension built up to the second story of two of the stores. He coolly looked down the thirty feet between him and the ground, while the excited crowd first cried jump! and then some of them more considerately looked for a ladder. A long plank was presently found and answered the same as a ladder, and it

was placed at once against the building, down which the man soon after slid. But while these preparations were going on there suddenly appeared another man at a fourth story window of the building below, which had no projection, but was flush from the top to the ground—four stories and a basement. His escape by the stairway was evidently cut off, and he looked despairingly down the fifty feet between him and the ground. The crowd grew almost frantic at the sight, for it was only a choice of deaths before him—by fire or by being crushed to death by the fall. Senseless cries of jump! jump! went up from the crowd—senseless, but full of sympathy, for the sight was absolutely agonizing. Then for a minute or two he disappeared, perhaps even less, but it seemed so long a time that the supposition was that he had fallen, suffocated with the smoke and heat. But no, he appears again. First he throws out a bed; then some bed-clothes, apparently; why, probably even he does not know. Again he looks down the dead, sheer wall of fifty feet below him. He hesitates, and well he may, as he turns again and looks behind him. Then he mounts to the window-sill. His whole form appears naked to the shirt, and his white limbs gleam against the dark wall in the bright light as he swings himself below the window. Somehow—how, none can tell—he drops and catches upon the top of the window below him, of the third story. He looks and drops again, and seizes the frame with his hands, and his gleaming body once more straightens and hangs prone downward, and then drops instantly and accurately upon the window-sill of the third story. A shout, more of joy than applause, goes up from the breathless crowd, and those who had turned away their heads, not bearing to look upon him as he seemed about to drop to sudden and certain death, glanced up at him once more with a ray of hope at this daring and skilful feat. Into this window he crept to look, probably for a stairway, but appeared again presently, for here only was the only avenue of escape,

desperate and hopeless as it was. Once more he dropped his body, hanging by his hands. The crowd screamed, and waved to him to swing himself over the projection from which the other man had just been rescued. He tried to do this, and vibrated like a pendulum from side to side, but could not reach far enough to throw himself upon the roof. Then he hung by one hand, and looked down ; raising the other hand, he took a fresh hold, and swung from side to side once more to reach the roof. In vain ; again he hung motionless by one hand, and slowly turned his head over his shoulder and gazed into the abyss below him. Then gathering himself up, he let go his hold, and for a second a gleam of white shot down full forty feet, to the foundation of the basement. Of course it killed him. He was taken to a drug store near by, and died in ten minutes.

F I R E S

IN OTHER

STATES AND TOWNS.

WHILE we were engaged in our own dreadful agony, neighboring States and communities were also visited by the raging monster, and suffered equally with, or more severely in proportion than, this metropolis. The drought which had desiccated everything, and even the air in our vicinity, was very general.

In Wisconsin and Michigan occasional conflagrations in the woods were occurring, which greatly multiplied and increased till the whole of northern Wisconsin seemed inundated with smoke from the burning woods, and western Michigan has been run over and almost completely devastated.

The loss of life and the actual suffering have been far more fearful than in Chicago, on account of the protracted nature of the visitation and the difficulty of procuring assistance.

Here we have had every comfort that a world could provide brought to our doors; but there, aid came more slowly, and the Governor of Wisconsin was obliged to check the flow to Chicago and divert it to its own legitimate channel. The following is his appeal to the people of the State:—

“The accounts of the appalling calamity which has fallen upon the east and west shores of Green Bay have not been exaggerated. The burned district comprises the counties of Oconto, Brown, Door, and Kewaunee, and parts of Manitowoc, and Outagamie. The great loss of life and property has resulted from the whirlwind of fire which swept over the country, making the

roads and avenues of escape impossible with fallen timber and burned bridges. The previous long drought had prepared everything for the flames. The loss of life has been very great. The first estimates were entirely inadequate, and even now it is feared that it is much greater than present accounts place it. It is known that at least 1,000 persons have been either burned, drowned, or smothered. Of these deaths, 600 or more were at Peshtigo and adjacent places, and the others in Door, Kewaunee, and Brown counties. Men are now penetrating that almost inaccessible region for the purpose of affording relief, and I fear that their reports will increase this estimate. From the most reliable sources of information I learn that not less than 3,000 men, women, and children have been rendered entirely destitute. Mothers are left with fatherless children, children are left homeless orphans. Distress and intense suffering are on every hand, where but a few days ago were comfort and happiness. Scores of men, women, and little children now lie helpless—they are burned and maimed—in temporary hospitals, cared for by more fortunate neighbors. These suffering people must be supplied with food, bedding, clothing, feed for their cattle, and the means of providing shelter during the winter. The response by the good people of Wisconsin has already been prompt and generous. It is meeting the immediate need, and is being faithfully and energetically distributed through the relief organization at Green Bay, but provision must be made for months in the future. There are wanted flour, salt, and cured meats—not cooked—blankets, bedding, stoves, baled hay, building materials, lights, farming implements and tools; boots, shoes, and clothing for men, women and children; log-chains, axes with handles, nails, glass, and house trimmings, and, indeed, everything needed by a farming community that has lost everything.

“To expedite the transfer at Green Bay, all boxes should have cards attached to them, stating their contents, and all supplies

should be sent to the Relief Committee at Green Bay. Money contributed should not be converted into supplies, but should be forwarded to the committee. Depots have been established at Green Bay, under the management of a committee of public-spirited and energetic men who have the confidence of all, for the receiving and despatching of supplies. They have organized a system of sub-depots contiguous to the burned regions, and steamboats and wagons are being sent out with supplies. Let us uphold their hands in the good work, and see that their depots be kept filled to overflowing. It is fortunate that we live in a wealthy and prosperous State, blessed with prosperity in business and overflowing harvests, and that thus we are, by a wise Providence, endowed with the means to help our less fortunate neighbors.

“I am urged by public-spirited citizens of the State to call an immediate extra session of the Legislature to provide for this calamity. I have given serious attention to this suggestion, and have concluded not to do so, for the reason that the expense of such a session would be likely to equal the amount which the State would be asked to contribute. Believing, therefore, that the people and the Legislature will endorse my action in this emergency, I have, in conjunction with the State Treasurer, decided to advance such a moderate sum of money as seems to be appropriate, in addition to that contributed.

LUCIUS FAIRCHILD,

Governor of the State of Wisconsin.

Mr. Joseph Harris writes to the Mayor of Milwaukee confirming all tidings of the disaster:—

“MY DEAR SIR—I sent a despatch to you by steamer this morning (the telegraph line being down), telling you of the frightful calamity at Peshtigo and Minekaune on Sunday night

last, and calling for medical aid for the sufferers. I now send you extras from both the extras here, in which the half or quarter of the suffering is not told. The suffering is and will be terrible, and, in addition to medical aid, we need, for the survivors, food and clothing. Mr. Isaac Stephenson has just come in from Peshtigo, and says they gathered up in one place the remains of nearly fifty bodies, besides about thirty in the sugar bush, and that other parts of the late village and adjoining woods have yet to be searched for more. Mr. S. says that the loss of life at Pesh-tigo by fire, and the drowned in the river, cannot be less than four hundred, and may be more. At Burch Creek, seven miles north from here, the whole settlement was burned, and fourteen or fifteen lives lost. Five of one family are just brought in here, presenting a spectacle sickening to behold.

“The steamer has just come across from Sturgeon Bay, and brings news of another horror there, in which Williamson’s mill, ten miles south of Sturgeon Bay, was burned on Sunday night, and fifty-five lives lost, only five or six escaping. That fire has, no doubt, spread to the settlements near, and great suffering must exist. No one can describe or exaggerate the horrors of the Peshtigo and Sturgeon Bay calamities. Those who escaped have lost everything, and the destitution at this season will be great.

“In order to understand the geography of the burned district, it is only necessary for the reader to open a map of Wisconsin and find Lake Winnebago, Fox River, Green Bay, Wolf River, and the west shore of Lake Michigan. Between Lake Winnebago, Fox River, and the long, narrow Green Bay on the west, and the great lake on the east, it is one unbroken forest-land. The narrow peninsula between bay and lake is covered with pine and cedar, while to the southward the timber is mainly hardwood. The narrow peninsula is peopled chiefly by Belgians, and the region south of them by Germans, Bohemians, and Americans.

“West of Lake Winnebago, Fox River, and Green Bay, the forest has its southern edge near Oshkosh ; about midway of the length of the little lake southward of Oshkosh, the prairie prevails. This region has a much larger share of Americans among its population.

“Now, all over this tract of country, as well as everywhere in the Northwest, there had been no rain to wet the soil since the 1st of July. Both man and beast have suffered by lack of water, whilst field and forest alike have been parched to tinder. In this state of things—everything being ready to kindle and easy to burn, with no water to quench a fire—fire was set in many places by sparks from locomotives, by droppings from pipes and cigars among dry leaves and sawdust, and by camp fires of railway laborers, and straightway the whole country side began to burn, and the burning spread and overmastered man and his struggles, until now the flames have travelled over at least three thousand square miles, killing and consuming the timber, burning fences, bridges, stacks, barns, farmsteads, orchards, with many thousand head of cattle. From these burnt-out farms the people fled into the small villages that fringe the rivers and shores of the bay and lake, hoping to find there food, employment, and shelter during the bitter winter of that high latitude. Scarcely, however, are the villages thus crowded with the flying wretches, when the fire attacks the towns themselves, and almost in a twinkling dwellings, mills, lumber yards, and even the very acres of logs floating in the still water are whirled into smoke and ashes. Many poor creatures have the life scorched out of them whilst running to leap into the water ; whole families dropped dead on the sand within one or two yards of the lake or the river ; others drowned or were licked off the logs by sheets of flame that leaped from bank to bank of the streams. Furthermore, everywhere, both in town and country, all food is destroyed, all clothing is ashes, all shelter has disap-

peared. And what is worse, the terrible sub-Arctic winter sets in about the 1st of November, with its deep, drifting snows and its long and bitter nights."

The Milwaukee Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association add their testimony to the awful nature and extent of the ruin and woe.

"In accordance with the instruction received from the Association, your committee of relief, accompanied by S. J. H. Thompson, of Milwaukee, with a quantity of supplies, reached Green Bay late on the evening of the 11th inst. We found that the relief committee at this point had discontinued their labors for the day, and that we could not ascertain that night definitely the condition of the country over which the fire had swept, but the impression given us was that all the immediate necessities of the destitute people had been supplied. We were much disappointed in not finding something for our hands to do immediately, and, not being quite satisfied with the reports given us, it was decided that Dr. Nichols, who was familiar with the location of Peshigo, should immediately proceed there and report upon the necessities of the people. The next morning Mr. Childs ascertained from Captain Hart, of the steamer Northwest, that the sufferers of the district lying between Peshtigo and Oconto were reaching the latter place in a deplorable condition, and that there was an urgent demand for immediate supplies of food and clothing at that point. Captain Hart kindly gave permission for the committee to ship a large quantity of our supplies at once by his steamer, and Dr. Thompson and Mr. Childs proceeded at once to Oconto upon their own responsibility. A portion of the supplies were left at Pensaukie, to be sent across the bay to Little Sturgeon Bay, from whence a cry for aid had just come.

"Proceeding next to Oconto, these gentlemen found that the story of suffering and destitution had not been half told. They met, however, with a hearty co-operation from Mayor Smith and

Messrs. Cole, Ellis, Goodrich, and many other citizens, who were already doing all in their power to alleviate the suffering. The ladies, as usual, were working nobly, and had fourteen sewing-machines constantly employed, furnishing 200 per day with clothing, some with whole, others with parts of suits.

“Dr. Nichols, on his arrival at Peshtigo Harbor, examined as rapidly as possible the situation there, thence proceeded to Peshtigo village, seven miles up the river, and from there crossed over to Marinette, six miles away to the east, on the Menomonee River. Here the larger portion of the sick and burned had been taken.

“At Peshtigo Harbor were a considerable number of those who had fled from the village after the fire. Some were severely burned, and all deplorably destitute.

“At Peshtigo village there remained only a few engaged in searching for and burying the dead. At Marinette fifty of the sufferers were found in the Dunlap House, which had been converted temporarily into a hospital. Many were distributed among the homes of the citizens. These were attentively cared for by Drs. Jones and Brunschweiler, assisted by a corps of volunteer physicians from different parts of the State, who had come up to render some assistance in the emergency. The Relief Committee at this place was active and efficient, and with the concerted action of all parties everything was being done that was possible for the comfort and restoration of the sufferers.

“About fifteen per cent. of those injured are so badly burned that it is impossible for them to recover. The others will be able to return to business in a month's time, or less. The burns occurred most frequently upon the feet, hands, and face, and nearly all suffer from the inhalation of hot sand and cinders, and from the usual pulmonary complications of burns.

“The fire which destroyed Peshtigo occurred on the evening of the 8th inst., and history has never furnished a parallel of its

terrible destructiveness. Shortly after the church-going people had returned from the evening service, an ominous sound was heard, like the distant roar of the sea, or of a coming storm. This increased in intensity, and soon the inhabitants became alarmed and apprehensive of coming danger. Balls of fire were observed to fall like meteors in different parts of the town, igniting whatever they came in contact with. By this time the whole population were thoroughly aroused and alarmed, and caught up their children and what valuables they could hastily seize, and began to flee for a place of safety. Now a bright light appeared in the south-west horizon, gradually increasing till the heavens were aglow with light. But a few moments elapsed after this before the horrible tornado of fire came upon the people, and enveloped them in flame, smoke, burning sand, and cinders. Those who had not now reached the river or some other place of safety were suffocated and burned to a cinder before they could advance a half dozen steps further. God only knows the horror and terrible suffering of the whole town of Peshtigo on that memorable Sunday night. It seemed as if the love of God had been withdrawn from the place, and the fiery fiends of hell had been loosened to wantonly vex and torment the people.

“No tongue can tell, no pen can describe, no brush can depict the realities of that night. Exaggeration would be utterly impossible. It defies human ingenuity. It was the destruction of Sodom re-enacted. It seemed as if the wickedness of the place had mocked God until his fiery thunderbolts were loosened for its destruction. But now he who had been boldest in sin was first to call upon his Maker for succor.

“The character of this fire was unlike any we have ever seen described before. It was a flame fanned by a hurricane, and accompanied with various electrical phenomena. Those that survived the terrible ordeal testify that they received electrical shocks, while they saw electrical flames flash in the air and dance

over the surface of the earth around them. But the fury of the flash was past in half an hour, though the fire continued to burn more or less fiercely during the whole night.

“The full effects of the storm were not apparent until daylight returned, and the survivors could come forth from their retreats. A party of one hundred and fifty fortunately ran together upon a low meadow below the bridges, and all were saved. A family of five persons saved themselves by jumping into a shallow well. Another family of the same number were all suffocated in a like resort. A large number threw themselves into the mill-pond and sustained themselves by clinging to the boom and floating logs, at the same time continually wetting the head to prevent it from roasting.

“We saw many children, some only one month old, which had been kept in the water the whole night, and yet survived. Some who were too ill to walk were taken from their beds and thrown into the water.

“A large number were drowned, some by being trampled upon or thrown off their legs by the cattle and horses that, maddened by the fire, rushed into the water. Many entire families perished. Eleven were lost out of one family.

“Some of the bodies were so thoroughly burned and consumed that they could be scooped up and held in the double hands. But the details and incidents are too harrowing to relate.

“The tornado came from the south-west, and swept over a tract of country eight or ten miles in width, and of indefinite length. The timber in its course was felled by the wind and burned by the fire, and every vestige of fence and building was swept away, with two or three exceptions. Sometimes the wind struck the earth with such force that the small undergrowth was torn up and kept in winrows, while at other times it would skip away from the earth. The whole population of Peshtigo village and of the farm-lands in its vicinity was 2,000, and fully one-

third of those perished on that fearful night. On the east shore of the bay reports place the loss of life fully as high as at Pesh-tigo, making the entire loss of life reach the fearfully large number of 1,200.

“The immediate wants of the survivors are nearly supplied, but no inconsiderable amount will be required to enable them to live through the winter. The proclamation of Governor Fairchild of the 14th states truthfully the demands these persons have upon us, and is meeting with a hearty response from every part of the State. Let the good work go on, for if ever there was a case for sympathy surely this is one. The people have been literally stripped of everything. Not a vestige of house, or fences, or anything of a combustible nature, remains. A more desolate spectacle than the present site of what was once the pleasant village of Peshtigo cannot be imagined or described.”

Other accounts glow and thrill with the horrors of the fiery days which consumed so much wealth and so many lives. The fire tornado was heard at a distance like the roaring of the sea. Balls of fire were observed to fall, igniting whatever they touched.

To one visiting the locality after the fire, the great wonder is not that so many people should have perished, but that a single individual remains to describe the fearful scene through which he passed. Certainly no one of the few that did escape expected anything but certain destruction at the time. The deadly, withering fire of the battle-field appals the stoutest heart, even though there is a hope that a victory and triumph may be gained. But the enemy that came down on the miserable people of Peshtigo was irresistible. All efforts to oppose it were futile. Hope fled from every heart at the very onset of the storm.

Several families sought refuge in a large boarding-house, but it quickly took fire and burned. A few of the inmates succeeded in reaching the river. Many were burned in their flight, and a

mother was consumed in the building, with her five children, which she would not desert.

Mr. Beebe and his family were at the store, and attempted to flee to the water, which was only half a dozen rods distant, but all perished in scorching flames except a little boy.

Several, seeing the hopelessness of escape, in their desperation attempted to take their own lives.

Many families became separated in the general confusion that followed the first alarm, and those that survived suffered the most intense anxiety concerning the fate of the others. Some, gaining a secure position, afterward lost their lives in their vain search for their friends.

A family from the East was visiting with Mr. May, and the whole of both families were burned up together.

Many who were saved owe their lives to the exertion of others who were near them, and a score of heroic deeds were narrated to us. In contrast with this, we heard of human hyenas who prowled over the ground as soon as the danger of the storm was passed, plundering the dead and helpless. Can human depravity ever find a better illustration?

There are other tales of suffering and anguish told of that terrible night that are too harrowing to write or think of. Verily the Peshtigo horror will long be remembered.

There is little heart to write the tales of these sad and fearful times. Eye-witnesses cannot describe them by word. The pen can only give an idea, and hardly even that, of the woe, the weeping, the wailing, the homes ruined, the lives lost! Early Wednesday morning, every available horse and wagon was brought into requisition for the purpose of reaching the sufferers in the different settlements within the range of the tornado of Sunday night's fire.

Too much credit cannot be given to the citizens of Oconto for the active sympathy displayed upon the occasion. The different

supply teams reached their destination during the afternoon. Parties of men with axes were employed in advance of the teams to chop away the fallen trees and render the roads passable. The bridges, culverts, etc., were burned, and much time was taken up in actually building a way through.

We say we cannot describe the scenes; we cannot. Infants clasped in mothers' arms; fathers, brothers, sisters, stiff in their last embrace; actual lines of dead from the once happy farmhouse to the adjoining creek; charred groups, blackened corpses, crumbling bones, lacerated and torn members; the smiling babyhood a few hours past, the adolescent, the old, in one horrid heap of death, is all that is left of the country travelled over. The roadsides are strewn with dead horses, oxen, cows, swine, fowl. Even the untamed beasts of the forest flew towards civilization for relief, but only to find death in their flight.

Deer, bear, rabbits, were discovered in profusion burned to a crisp. And all this within a few miles of the city. From the few left to tell the tale there can be yet little obtained in their half-crazed situation. We ourselves saw the father consign to their last resting-place all that was left of a family of six. We cared little about questioning, and he seemed to care as little about speaking. Having given him a few morsels of bread for necessary subsistence, we passed on, and saw the babe in its mother's arms, the boy, the girl, in nakedness, the young woman, the mother, the father, in one sad group of death. Again, a family, apparently, for there was nothing left but the bones, and hardly bones at that. Yes, there was one of that family of which there was a little left. It was the baby. The poor mother, forgetful of herself, clung to her innocent offspring, and her last effort must have been to save her young one's life. The mother's hand, or the charred remains thereof, was on the babe's head, as if engaged in pressing it to the ground, face downwards, to save it from suffocation; the little face, that was all that was unin-

jured. A prominent young man was found with his throat cut, and his knife lying alongside him. He must have been crazed by tortures, or preferred immediate death to lingering agony. Hundreds of such cases could we cite, but to what use? Let us merely take, if possible, into the mind's eye a tract of desolation, suffering, death, poverty, want and loneliness, ruined homes, burned corpses—perhaps happier than the living—and may the always wise Providence have mercy upon their souls.

Yesterday morning, in company with several gentlemen from Marinette, Wis., and Menominee, Mich., we visited the site of what was once the beautiful and thriving little village of Peshigo. It contained about 1,500 people, and was one of the busiest, liveliest, and one of the most enterprising communities along the bay shore. Standing amid the charred and blackened embers, with the frightfully mutilated corpses of men, women, children, horses, oxen, cows, dogs, swine, and fowl—every house, shed, barn, outhouse, or structure of any kind swept from the earth as with the very besom of destruction—our emotions cannot be described in language. No pen dipped in liquid fire can paint the scene; language “in thoughts that breathe and words that burn” gives but the faintest impression of its horrors.

From the survivors we glean the following in reference to the scene at the village and in the farming region commonly known as the “Sugar Bush:” Sunday evening, after church, for about half an hour, a death-like stillness hung over the doomed town. The smoke from the fires in the region around was so thick as to be stifling, and hung like a funeral pall over everything, and all was enveloped in Egyptian darkness. Soon light puffs of air were felt; the horizon at the south-east, south, and south-west began to be faintly illuminated; a perceptible trembling of the earth was felt, and a distant roar broke the awful silence. People began to fear that some awful calamity was impending, but as yet no one even dreamed of the danger.

The illumination soon became intensified into a fierce lurid glare; the roar deepened into a howl, as if all the demons from the infernal pit had been let loose, when the advance gusts of wind from the main body of the tornado struck. Chimneys were blown down, houses were unroofed, the roof of the woodenware factory was lifted, a large warehouse filled with tubs, pails, kanakans, keelers, and fish kits was nearly demolished, and amid the confusion, terror, and terrible apprehension of the moment, the fiery element in tremendous inrolling billows and masses of sheeted flame enveloped the devoted village. The frenzy of despair seized on all hearts, strong men bowed like reeds before the fiery blast; women and children, like frightened spectres, flitting through the awful gloom, were swept away like autumn leaves. Crowds rushed for the bridge, but the bridge, like all else, was receiving its baptism of fire. Hundreds crowded into the river; cattle plunged in with them, and being huddled together in the general confusion of the moment, many who had taken to the water to avoid the flames were drowned. A great many were on the blazing bridge when it fell. The débris from the burning town was hurled over and on the heads of those who were in the water, killing many and maiming others, so that they gave up in despair and sank to a watery grave.

In less than an hour from the time the tornado struck the town, the village of Peshtigo was annihilated!

Full one hundred perished either in the flames or in the water, and all the property was wiped out of existence!

In the "Sugar Bush" the loss of life was even greater in proportion to the number of inhabitants than in the village. Whole families are destroyed, and over a thickly settled region in the heavy hardwood timber, consisting of two or three townships, there is scarcely a family but is now left destitute, and mourns for the loss of some of its loved ones.

Hon. I. Stephenson, of Marinette, went yesterday a short distance on the road leading to the upper bush, and counted thirty-seven dead bodies !

Another party informs us that he found over fifty dead on one road, and over forty on another.

In the lower bush the trunks of the fallen trees, lying in every conceivable direction, are strewn so thickly over the ground that it must be many days before the entire region can be thoroughly penetrated, so as to bury the dead and succor the living.

The number who have perished is not yet definitely ascertained, but enough is known to place first reports far in the background. At Peshtigo village over one hundred were either burned to death or drowned in the river in their efforts to escape the flames. The "Sugar Bush" is divided into what is known as the Upper, Middle, and Lower Bush. From what we can learn, and by gleanings our information from all possible sources, we are quite certain that over sixty were burned to death in the Upper Bush, about seventy-five in the Middle, and fully one hundred and twenty in the Lower Bush, miserably, terribly perished.

Hundreds are maimed and helpless, many of them rendered cripples for life. Thus, in one short hour, whole townships were devastated by the fire-fiend, nearly four hundred human beings were hurled into eternity by one of the most awful visitations ever known in the history of the world, and the wretched survivors left with nothing to subsist on but such supplies as are and may be contributed by the charities of the people. To the despairing cries for help, the people, having their sympathies fully aroused, have been and are responding nobly.

The whole country is a scene of devastation and ruin that no language can paint or tongue describe.

There is only one farm of any note in the entire bush that has escaped. This is the fine farm of Mr. Abram Place, in the upper bush. He, having an immense clearing, and protected by the

roads, was enabled to save his house, barn, and nearly all of his stock and supplies. His house has been an asylum for the suffering ones of that region, and he has rendered them all the assistance in his power.

Yesterday, Mulligan, having in his charge a gang of railroad employés, was engaged in gathering together the remains at Peshtigo and in the immediate vicinity, and identified all that it was possible to identify, and arranged the charred and blackened corpses for burial. He was assisted by his wife and several men, and his efforts have been noble and heroic. He deserves much credit for the good and efficient services he has rendered.

Nearly all the buildings of any value in Nenekaune were consumed in spite of the most energetic efforts, and we are safe in saying that had we been visited by such a tornado of wind and flame as our neighbors at Peshtigo, nothing could have been left of our town.

At Peshtigo and in the Sugar Bush all the cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry are destroyed. Miles of country, where but a few days ago existed pleasant farms and an abundance of the necessities of life, now lie devastated with not a living thing left.

Crowds of people, with teams and supplies, have gone to-day to gather such of the remains of the dead as can be found, to pay the last sad tribute to their memory, and perchance succor the few who may yet be living, but whom no aid has yet reached.

While our blinded eyes witnessed the destruction of our homes and business in the Garden City, the same heart-breaking scenes were transpiring in other places on either side of Lake Michigan, in Indiana, and Ontario. There was a carnival of death. A Chicago man, who lost heavily, had a small farm in Michigan, and there were his wife and son. The forest igniting, fire drove through his beautiful timber and land, roared around his dwelling, almost compelling the desertion of all to the flames. It was saved only by heroic exertions, and the farm was a waste. It

seemed as if sorrows were never to cease, and yet he held up his head like a Christian hero, trusting in God the good provider. More fortunate he than thousands whose all was stripped from them as the autumn winds disrobe the trees. Like these, thanks to God, the miserable victims will put forth life and vigor, and yet stretch out their thriving beauty to Heaven, and bask in the summer of His mercy who heals and restores whom He has smitten. The accounts of whole regions smoking like a volcano are not exaggerated, as no pen can fitly describe the occurrences of that memorable week from October 7th to the 14th. As a record of the state of things during this time the following items are worth preserving as material for the future historian. From Manistee came this intelligence—on the western shore of Michigan among the vast pine forests.

The fire which broke out in the pineries north-east of here, last week, was almost subdued, when a heavy gale sprang up from the southward, driving the flames and cinders toward Gifford & Ruddock's mills. This the fire company checked; but on Sunday evening a fire broke out near Canfield's mill, which is situated at the mouth of the river, and so intense was the heat that men could not get within a thousand yards of it. In less than half an hour the mill, together with about twenty dwelling-houses and boarding-houses, were totally consumed. A hill intervening between this and the town, the fire could run no further, and people were already congratulating themselves upon the narrow escape of Manistee, when a bright light was noticed north-east from the scene, and repairing to the spot, we found a number of dwellings wrapped in flames, and a regular equinoctial gale blowing—thus making it beyond human control to stay the conflagration. The damage at present is inestimable; but the largest part of the town, which is on the South Side, is destroyed, while so far twenty-seven buildings are totally gone on the North Side.

The loss, as near as I can learn, amounts to \$1,300,000, with only about one-fifth insurance.

The swing bridge is entirely destroyed ; the schooner Seneca Chief is burnt to the water's edge. Every building on the North Side (excepting the Fourth Ward school-house, the residence of George Thorp, and a Catholic church) is completely consumed.

Several serious accidents occurred, and some lives have been lost ; but there is such tumult and excitement that no one can give a fair answer to a question.

Where six mills stood yesterday, not a vestige remains except bungled up machinery—the woodwork and logs having burned out entirely. Blackbird Island is no more. The distress is great, and if food does not come forthwith there will be starvation.

Nothing can be heard from the north or north-eastern villages, as the heat prevents communication. The roads are so dry that sawdust burns like powder.

Special meetings of the council were held to devise means for meeting any emergency, which seemed momentarily to be ready to burst upon them with an intense fury. One fire in East Saginaw destroyed some hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of property, and several lives. Fires encircled the city on Wednesday, and grave apprehensions of total destruction were felt. Corrollton, the seat of the great salt-works, it is feared, was totally destroyed.

Between East Saginaw and Bridgeport the woods were yesterday one mass of flames and smoke. Beyond Bridgeport the scene is much the same. At Eggleston a large amount of property was consumed. A saw-mill, four houses, a store, and several little buildings of various kinds were destroyed. A fire took place about ten o'clock Tuesday morning, and it did not slacken in the least until the whole village of Eggleston was wiped out of existence.

On the Jackson, Lansing, and Saginaw line the fire is terrible.

Houses, portable mills, barns, timber, and crops are being consumed; the families have to leave their all, in many instances, and flee for their lives. At a point a short distance south of St. Charles, quite a number of buildings were destroyed, including boarding-houses and private residences. At St. Charles the fire is raging fearfully, the mills are all closed, and the men are working steadily and faithfully to prevent the spread of the flames.

At Pine Grove the entire property, including a mill and several houses, were destroyed. The property belonged to McArthur & Co., of Corunna, and was worth probably \$30,000. All that was saved from the lot were two small piles of lumber and one shanty.

A despatch from Lexington, Mich., says:

White Rock, Forestville, Elm Creek, and Cato are entirely destroyed by fire. Hundreds are without shelter or food.

The loss at White Rock can safely be estimated at \$250,000, while at Forestville it will far exceed this amount. Thomson & Brother, of White Rock, alone lost \$60,000.

The steamer Comet, while coasting along Lake Huron, found the woods on fire at many points, and the smoke on board the steamer so suffocating as to compel them to retreat to the cabins. Large cinders from the burning shore were driven far enough out on the lake to land upon her decks, rendering it necessary to wash the decks down at frequent intervals. From Lexington to Point aux Barques the shore, to all appearances, was a continuous flame, which was wafted along with a strong westerly wind.

From Bay City, Michigan, the news is: "Fires are raging in the woods in every direction, and the atmosphere has been so smoky in consequence that it has been difficult to distinguish objects at even a short distance. Navigation is also extremely difficult. Reports from the timber region north, state that a vast amount of pine timber has been entirely destroyed."

We hear from Lansingburg that "the greatest excitement prevails here on account of the fire in the woods surrounding this place. To the west is a large marsh, which is now on fire, and is fast approaching the village."

The town of Owosso was in great danger of being consumed by fire.

The dry weather still continues, and fires are raging in the woods in all directions. At the village of Mt. Morris, Mich., the citizens turned out in large force to arrest the progress of the fire that is burning near that village. I am informed, says a correspondent, that valuable pine lands at the head of the Flint River and its tributaries are being run over by the fire, which is destroying thousands of dollars' worth of timber.

What a period of terror and destruction for the North-west, unparalleled in our history, and quite unexampled in the annals of time, if we consider the brevity of duration and the immense losses of property and life! In order to give a comparative view of the present calamity with others occasioned by fire, we annex an account of several of the great conflagrations of the past:—

HISTORY OF THE GREAT FIRES IN THE PAST.

THE BURNING OF MOSCOW.

We reproduce from the pages of Sir Archibald Alison, whose history is deservedly ranked as standard authority, the following description of the burning of the ancient capital of Muscovy, an event which, more than all others combined, broke the power of the first Napoleon:—

At eleven o'clock on the 14th September, 1812, the advanced guard of the French army, from an eminence on the road, descried the long-wished for minarets of Moscow. The domes of above two hundred churches, and the massy summits of a hun-

dred palaces, glittered in the rays of the sun—the form of the cupolas gave an Oriental aspect to the scene; but, high above all, the cross indicated the ascendancy of the European faith. The scene which presented itself to the eye resembled rather a province adorned with palaces, domes, woods, and buildings, than a single city; a boundless accumulation of houses, churches, public edifices, rivers, and parks, stretched out over swelling eminences and gentle vales as far as the eye could reach. The mixture of architectural decoration and pillared scenery, with the bright-green foliage, was peculiarly fascinating to European eyes. Everything announced its Oriental character, but yet without losing the features of the West. Asia and Europe met in that extraordinary city.

Struck by the magnificence of the spectacle, the leading squadrons halted, and exclaimed: “Moscow! Moscow!” and the cry, repeated from rank to rank, at length reached the emperor’s guard. The soldiers breaking their array, rushed tumultuously forward, and Napoleon, hastening in the midst of them, gazed impatiently on the splendid scene. His first words were: “Behold at last that famous city!” the next, “It was full time!” Intoxicated with joy, the army descended from the heights. The fatigues and dangers of the campaign were forgotten in the triumph of the moment, and eternal glory was anticipated in the conquest which they were about to complete. Murat at the head of the cavalry speedily advanced to the gates, and concluded a truce with Milaradowitch for the evacuation of the capital. But the entry of the French troops speedily dispelled the illusions in which the army had indulged. Moscow was found to be deserted. Its long streets and splendid palaces resounded only with the clang of the hoofs of the invaders’ horses. Not a sound was to be heard in its vast circumference; the dwellings of three hundred thousand persons seemed as silent as

the wilderness. Napoleon waited in vain until evening for a deputation from the magistrates or chief nobility. Not a human being came forward to deprecate his hostility, and the mournful truth could at length be no longer concealed, that Moscow, as if struck by enchantment, was bereft of its inhabitants. Wearied of fruitless delay, the emperor, on the morning of the 15th, advanced into the city, and entered the ancient palace of the czars, amidst no other concourse than that of his own soldiers.

The Russians, however, in abandoning their capital, had resolved upon a sacrifice greater than the patriotism of the world had yet exhibited. The Governor, Count Rostopchin, set the example of devotion by preparing the means of destruction for his country palace, which was splendidly furnished, and adorned with the finest works of art, which he set fire to by applying the torch with his own hands to his nuptial chamber; and to the gates of the palace he had affixed the following inscription: "During eight years I have embellished this country-house and lived happily in it in the bosom of my family. The inhabitants of this estate, to the number of seventeen hundred, quit it at your approach, in order that it may not be sullied by your presence. Frenchmen! at Moscow I have abandoned to you my two houses, with their furniture, worth half a million roubles; here you will find nothing but ashes."

The nobles were prepared, in a public assembly, to have imitated the example of the Numantians, and destroy the city they could no longer defend, and Kutosoff had promised to give Rostopchin three days' notice before he evacuated the city, in order that it might be held. But owing to the advance of the French being more rapid than had been anticipated, the notice was not given or the meeting held, and the governor was left to act on his own responsibility. Everything, however had been prepared for that noble sacrifice. The authorities, when they retired, carried with them the fire-engines, and everything capa-

ble of arresting a conflagration, and combustibles were disposed in the principal edifices to favor the progress of the flames. The persons entrusted with the duty of firing the city, only awaited the retreat of their countrymen to commence the work of destruction. Rostopchin was the author of this sublime effort of patriotic devotion, but it involved a responsibility greater than either government or any individual could support, and he was afterward disgraced for the heroic deed.

The sight of the grotesque towers and venerable walls of the Kremlin first revived the emperor's imagination, and rekindled those dreams of Oriental conquest which, from his earliest years, had floated through his mind. His followers dispersed over the vast extent of the city, gazed with astonishment on the sumptuous palaces of the nobles, and the gilded domes of the churches. Evening came on, and with increasing wonder the French troops traversed the central parts of the metropolis, recently so crowded with passengers, but not a living creature was to be seen to explain the universal desolation. It seemed like a city of the dead. Night approached; an unclouded moon illuminated those beautiful palaces, those vast hotels, those deserted streets—all was still; the silence of the tomb. The officers broke open the doors of some of the principal mansions in search of sleeping quarters. They found everything in perfect order; the bedrooms were fully furnished as if guests were expected; the drawing-rooms bore the marks of having been recently inhabited; even the work of the ladies was on the tables, the keys in the wardrobes; but not an inmate was to be seen. By degrees a few of the lower class of slaves emerged, pale and trembling from the cellars, showed the way to the sleeping apartments, and laid open everything which these sumptuous mansions contained; but the only account they could give was that the whole inhabitants had fled, and that they alone were left in the deserted city. But the terrible catastrophe soon commenced. On the night of

the 14th a fire broke out in the Bourse, behind the Bazaar, which soon consumed that noble edifice, and spread to a considerable part of the crowded streets in the vicinity. This, however, was but the prelude to more extended calamities. At midnight on the 15th, a bright light was seen to illuminate the northern and western parts of the city; and the sentinels on watch at the Kremlin soon discovered the splendid edifices in that quarter to be in flames. The wind changed repeatedly during the night, but to whatever quarter it veered the conflagration extended itself; fresh fires were every instant seen breaking out in all directions, and Moscow soon exhibited the spectacle of a sea of flame agitated by the wind. The soldiers, drowned in sleep or overcome by intoxication, were incapable of arresting its progress; and the burning fragments floating through the hot air, began to fall on the roofs and courts of the Kremlin. The fury of an autumnal tempest added to the horrors of the scene: it seemed as if the wrath of Heaven had combined with the vengeance of man to consume the invaders of the city they had conquered.

But it was chiefly during the nights of the 18th and 19th that the conflagration attained its greatest violence. At that time the whole city was wrapped in flames, and volumes of fire of various colors ascended to the heavens in many places, diffusing a prodigious light on all sides, and attended by an intolerable heat. These balloons of flame were accompanied in their ascent by a frightful hissing noise and loud explosions, the effect of the vast stores of oil, resin, tar, spirits, and other combustible materials with which the greater part of the shops were filled. Large pieces of painted canvas, unrolled from the outside of the buildings by the violence of the heat, floated on fire in the atmosphere, and sent down down on all sides a flaming shower, which spread the conflagration in quarters even the most removed from where it originated. The wind, naturally high, was raised by the sud-

den rarefaction of the air produced by the heat, to a perfect hurricane. The howling of the tempest drowned even the roar of the conflagration ; the whole heavens were filled with the whirl of the volumes of smoke and flame which rose on all sides, and made midnight as bright as day ; while even the bravest hearts, subdued by the sublimity of the scene, and the feeling of human impotence in the midst of such elemental strife, sank and trembled in silence.

The return of day did not diminish the terrors of the conflagration. An immense crowd of hitherto unseen people, who had taken refuge in the cellars and vaults of their buildings, issued forth as the flames reached their dwellings ; the streets were speedily filled with multitudes flying in every direction, with their most precious articles ; while the French army, whose discipline this fatal event had entirely dissolved, assembled in drunken crowds, and loaded themselves with the spoils of the city. Never in modern times had such a scene been witnessed. The men were loaded with packages, charged with their most precious effects, which often took fire as they were carried along, and which they were obliged to throw down to save themselves. The women had often two or three children on their backs, and as many led by the hand, which, with trembling steps and piteous cries, sought their devious way through the labyrinth of flame. Many old men, unable to walk, were drawn on hurdles or wheelbarrows by their children and grandchildren, while their burnt beards and smoking garments showed with what difficulty they had been rescued from the flames. Often the French soldiers, tormented by hunger and thirst, and loosened from all discipline by the horrors which surrounded them, not contented with the booty in the streets, rushed headlong into the burning edifices, to ransack their cellars for the stores of wine and spirits which they contained, and beneath the ruins great numbers perished miserably, the victims of intemperance and the sur-

rounding fire. Meanwhile the flames, fanned by the tempestuous gale, advanced with frightful rapidity, devouring alike in their course the palaces of the great, the temples of religion, and the cottages of the poor. For thirty-six hours, the conflagration continued at its height, and during that time above nine-tenths of the city was destroyed. The remainder, abandoned to pillage and deserted by its inhabitants, offered no resources to the army. Moscow had been conquered; but the victors had gained only a heap of ruins. It is estimated that 30,800 houses were consumed, and the total value of property destroyed amounted to £30,000,000.

THE GREAT FIRE IN LONDON.

We must go back more than a couple of centuries to find a parallel to the terrible fire which has wrapped the city of Chicago in a sea of resistless flame. On the 2d of September, 1666, the city of London was almost entirely destroyed by what has since been known as the Great Fire. This awful conflagration gained headway with the same terrible rapidity as that of Sunday night, and in five dreadful days of ruin and terror and panic laid two-thirds of the English metropolis in ashes. Like the fire at Chicago it broke out upon a Sunday, though at a different hour—two o'clock in the morning. It originated in a bakehouse, kept by a man with the quaint name of Farryner, at Pudding lane, near the Tower. At that period the buildings in the English capital were chiefly constructed of wood, with pitched roofs, and in this particular locality, which was immediately adjacent to the water side, the stores were mainly filled with materials employed in the equipment of shipping, mostly of course of a highly combustible nature. To add to the conspiring causes of the immense mischief in which the fire ultimately resulted, the pipes from the New River—the source of the water supply of the city—were found to be empty, and the engine which raised water

from the Thames was among the first property destroyed. The vacillation and indecision of the lord mayor aggravated the confusion. For several hours he refused to listen to the counsel given him to call in the aid of the military, and when the probable proportions of the fire were plainly apparent, and when it was clear that the destruction of a block of houses was absolutely necessary to the preservation of the city, he declined to accept the responsibility of destroying them until he could obtain the consent of their owners. All through Sunday the wind increased in violence, and the fire sped with incredible rapidity from house to house, from street to street, on its work of havoc. We cannot now do better than transcribe the account of the further mischief caused by the fire, given by Mr. John Evelyn, in his "diary." It reads as follows:—

"*Sept. 3.* The fire continuing, after dinner I took coach with my wife and son and went to the Bankside, in Southwark, where we beheld that dreadful spectacle—the whole city in dreadful flames near ye water side: all the houses from the bridge, all Thames street, and upwards towards Cheapside down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed.

"The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was as light as day for ten miles round about after a dreadful manner) when conspiring with a fierce eastern wind in a very drie season; I went on foot to the same place, and saw the whole south part of the city burning, from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornehill (for it kindled back against the wind as well as forwards). Tower street, Fenchurch street, Gracious street, and so along to Bainard's castle, and was now taking hold of St. Paul's church, to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly. The conflagration was so universal and the people so astonished, that, from the beginning—I know not from what, despondency or fate—they hardly strived to quench it, so that there was nothing hearde or seene but crying out and la-

mentations, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods, such a strange consternation there was upon them—so, as it burned both in length and breadth, the churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals, monuments and ornaments, leaping after a prodigious manner from house to house and streete to streete, at greate distance one from ye other; for ye heate, with a long set of fair and warme weather had even ignited the air, and prepared the materials to conceive the fire which devoured after an incredible manner houses, furniture and everything. Here we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as on ye other, ye carts, &c., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewed with moveables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle such as haply the world had not seene the like since the foundation of it, nor to be outdone till the universal conflagration. All the sky was of a fiery aspect like the top of a burning oven, the light seene above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant my eyes may never behold the like, now seeing above ten thousand houses all in one flame; the noise and crackling and thunder of the impetuous flames, ye shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses and churches was like an hideous storme, and the fire all about so hot and inflamed that at last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand stille and let the flames burn on, which they did for neere two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds of smoke were dismall, and reached upon computation, neer fifty miles in length. Thus I left it in the afternoone burning—a resemblance to Sodom or the last day. London was, but is no more!

“*Sept. 4.* The burning still rages, and it was now gotten so far as the Inner temple, olde Fleete streete, the Olde Bailey,

Ludgate Hill, Warwick lane, Newgate, Paule's Chain, Watling streete, now flaming and most of it reduced to ashes ; the stones of Paule's flew like grenades, ye melting lead running downe the streetes in a streame and the very pavements glowing with fiery rednesse, so as no horse or man was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the passages, so that no help could be applied. The eastern wind still more impetuously drove the flames forward. Nothing but ye almighty powers of God was able to stay them, for vaine was ye helpe of man.

"*Sept.* 5. It crossed towards Whitehalle; oh, the confusion there was then at that court! It pleased his majesty to command me among the rest to looke after the quenching of Fetter lane, and to preserve if possible that part of Holborne, while the rest of ye gentlemen tooke their several posts and began to consider that nothing was so likely to put a stop but the blowing up of so many houses as might make a wider gap than any that had yet been made by the ordinary method of pulling them down by engines."

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Then after a description of the abating of the wind, and the gradual dying out of the fire, the quaint old diarist continues:—

"The poore inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields and Moorfields, as far as Highgate, and several myles in circle ; some under tents, some under miserable hutts and hovels, many without a rag or any necessary utensils, bed or board, who from delicatenesse, riches and easy accommodation in stately and well furnished houses, were reduced now to extreamest misery and poverty."

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And again:—

"I then went towards Islington and Highgate, where one might have seene 200,000 people of ranks and degrees dispersed

and lying along by their heapes of what they could save from the fire, deploring their losse, and though ready to perish from hunger and destitution, yet not asking one penny for relief, which to me appeared a stranger sight than I had yet beheld."

How vivid an idea of the suffering and misery entailed by this terrible visitation we find in this simple but expressive narrative! Nearly two-thirds of the entire city was destroyed. Thirteen thousand houses, eighty-nine churches, and many public buildings were reduced to charred wood and ashes. Three hundred and seventy three acres within, and sixty-three acres without the walls were utterly devastated. Well might Mr. Evelyn compare the fire to that which overwhelmed Sodom and Gomorrah, or that other and yet more awful one which will engulf the entire world at the day of doom.

NEW YORK'S GREAT FIRE.

That great event in the history of New York, the "Great Fire," occurred on the night of the 16th of December, 1835. It was declared by the croakers of the time a damper upon the city's prosperity and a clog to the wheels of its progress towards its present position. But though the people lost a great part of their capital, they did not lose their strength, energy, and enterprise, and the proper application of those qualities caused their city to rise, Phœnixlike, from its ashes more beautiful, stronger, and fuller of life than before.

At between eight and nine o'clock of the evening above stated the fire was discovered in the store No. 25 Merchant street, a narrow street that led from Pearl into Exchange street, near where the Post-office then was. The flames spread rapidly, and at ten o'clock forty of the most valuable dry goods stores in the city were burned down or on fire. The narrowness of Merchant street, and the gale which was blowing, aided the spread of the destructive element. It passed from building to building, leaped

across the street between the blocks, urged by the gale and in no wise deterred by the feeble forces opposing it. The night was bitterly cold, and, though the firemen were most energetic, the freezing of the hose and the water in their defective engines, combined with their sufferings from the weather, made their efforts of little avail. The flames spread north and south, east and west, until almost every building on the area bounded by Wall, South, and Broad streets, and Coenties' slip, was burning, gutted, or levelled to the ground. There was not a building destroyed on Broad street, nor on the block on Wall street from William to Broad street, the fire taking an almost circular course just at the rear of the buildings on the streets named. The scene in the night was one of indescribable grandeur, the glare from the three hundred buildings that were at one time burning, brightly lighting up the whole city. In all five hundred and thirty buildings were destroyed; they were of the largest and most costly description, and were filled with the most valuable goods. The total loss, estimated at about \$20,000,000, was afterwards found to be about \$15,000,000. Of the buildings destroyed the most important were the Merchant's Exchange, the Post-office, the offices of the celebrated bankers the Josephs, the Allens, and the Livingstons, the Phoenix bank, and the building owned and occupied by Arthur Tappan, then much despised for his anti-slavery sympathies. The business portion of the city was alone that burned over, so that few poor were rendered otherwise than without employment.

NEW YORK, 1845.

The greatest fire since that of December, 1835, that has devastated property in New York, began on the morning of the 20th of July, 1845. The fire originated in the sperm oil store in New street, near the corner of Exchange place, about 3 o'clock on the morning named, and spread over a great part of the territory

which had been the scene of the conflagration of 1835. The flames were communicated to a chair factory adjoining and nearer to the corner of Exchange place, whence they passed along Exchange place to Broad street. There they enwrapped a building in which was a quantity of saltpetre, or gunpowder, on storage. When the building had been burning for about fifteen minutes a most awful explosion took place which shook the city like an earthquake. The building was blown up, and with it some other buildings. Immediately after the explosion fire was discovered in four different places, and shortly the rear of the entire block was blazing. Soon the fire leaped to the south side of Broad street, passing at the same time to Broadway. All this time the firemen, although making the most strenuous efforts, had effected but little toward suppressing the flames. On Broadway they spread downward toward the Bowling Green; and on Broad street north toward Wall street and south to Beaver street, along which they passed to New street, both sides of which had been devastated. The fire was checked ere it had reached the magnificent Merchants' Exchange on its way to Wall street. Both sides of Exchange place, from Broadway to Broad street, and half way down to William, were burned. Every building on Broadway from Exchange place down was levelled, and then the flames turned into Marketfield street, where they were checked. Altogether about three hundred buildings were destroyed, among which were the costly shrines of commerce and finance and the abodes of the poverty stricken. A liberal estimate of the total loss is made at \$6,000,000, but this is belittled when the lamentable loss of life of which the explosion was the occasion is thought of. The number of persons whose lives were destroyed never was accurately ascertained, but it was generally believed at the time that about six persons perished.

PITTSBURG, 1845.

Pittsburg, Pa., was visited by a most destructive conflagration the 10th of April, 1845. By it a very large portion of the city was laid waste, and a greater number of houses destroyed than by all the fires that had occurred previously to it. Twenty squares, containing about 1,100 buildings were burned over. Of these buildings the greater part were business houses containing goods of immense value—grocery, dry goods, and commission houses—and the spring stocks of the latter had just been laid in. The fire commenced in a frame building at the corner of Second and Ferry streets, and the prevailing strong wind urged it with fearful rapidity through the city. So short was the time between the discovery of the flames and their spread through the city, that many persons were unable to save any of their household goods, while others, having got theirs to the walk, were compelled to flee and leave them to be seized and destroyed by the element.

The merchants were equally unsuccessful in saving anything from their warehouses. The loss was estimated at \$10,000,000.

PHILADELPHIA, 1850.

A conflagration by which an immense amount of property was destroyed, took place in Philadelphia, on the 9th of July, 1850. It began about four o'clock on the afternoon of that day, in a store at 78 North Delaware avenue. The fire was beyond control, when discovered, and soon spread, despite the most strenuous efforts to prevent it, to the storehouses adjoining. When the fire had reached the cellar of the building in which it had originated two explosions occurred, which rent the walls of the building and threw flakes of combustible matter in all directions, setting fire to many other buildings. Delaware avenue and Water street were covered with persons who exhibited little fear at these evidences of dangerous substances being stored in the building. Suddenly a third and most terrific explosion occurred, by which a number

of men, women, and children were killed, and several buildings demolished. This disaster caused a panic among the firemen and spectators, and in the efforts of all to escape from danger many were trampled upon and injured. Some were thrown into the Delaware, and others jumped in to get away from the falling bricks and beams sent up from the burning building by the explosion. The number of persons who lost their lives by the explosion was about thirty—nine persons who jumped into the river in a fright were drowned—and about one hundred persons injured. The area over which the fire spread contained about four hundred buildings. Its locality was one of the most densely populated in the city, and a large number of the residents having been poor people, the suffering caused was immense. The loss was about one million dollars, and the fire would be a comparatively small one had there been no loss of life.

PHILADELPHIA, 1865.

The most terrible conflagration of which Philadelphia was the theatre, after that of July, 1850, occurred there on the morning of February 8, 1865. Like its predecessor, it brought death to many, and in the most horrible and painful manner. The fire originated among several thousand barrels of coal-oil, that was stored upon an open lot on Washington street near Ninth. The flames spread through the oil as if it had been gunpowder, and in a very short time, 2,000 barrels were ablaze, and sending a huge volume of flame and smoke upward. The residents of the vicinity, awakened by the noise of the bells and firemen, and affrighted by the glare and nearness of the fire rushed in their night garments into the streets that were covered with snow and slush. The most prompt to leave their homes got off with their lives, but those near the spot where the fire commenced, and not prompt to escape, were met by a terrible scene.

The blazing oil poured into Ninth street and down to Federal,

making the entire street a lake of fire that ignited the houses on both sides of the street for two blocks. The flames also passed up and down the cross streets, and destroyed a number of houses. The fiery torch was whirled back and forth along the street at the pleasure of the wind, and as it passed destroyed everything in or near its course. People leaving their blazing homes, hoping to reach a place of safety, were roasted to death by it. Altogether, about twenty persons were roasted in the streets or houses. Firemen making vain endeavors to save the poor creatures from their horrible fate were fearfully burned. The loss of property amounted to about \$500,000, and fifty buildings were destroyed. From Washington street to Federal, on Ninth, every building was burned.

SAN FRANCISCO.

The city of San Francisco was retarded in its progress toward its present proud position by many causes, but by nothing more than fire. The most destructive of the many conflagrations which have occurred in that city began on the 3d of May, 1851, at eleven o'clock P.M., and was not overmastered until the 5th. The loss that was caused by it amounted to \$3,500,000, and it destroyed 2,500 buildings. The fire began in a paint shop on the west side of Portsmouth square, adjoining the American House. Although but a slight blaze when discovered, the building was within five minutes enwrapped with flames, and before the fire-engines could be got to work the American House and the building on the other side of the paint shop were also burning. The buildings being all of wood and extremely combustible, the fire spread up Clay street, back to Sacramento, and down Clay street towards Kearney with fearful rapidity. Soon the fire department was compelled to give up every attempt to extinguish it, and to confine their work to making its advance less rapid.

Pursuing this plan they checked the flames on the north side at Dupont street. But in every other direction it took its own course, and was only arrested at the water's edge and the ruins of the houses that had been blown up. The shipping in the harbor was only protected by the breaking up of the wharves. Thousands of persons were made homeless, and for a long time after lived in tents. The custom-house, seven hotels, the post-office, the offices of the steamship company, and the banking house of Page, Bacon & Co. were destroyed. During the continuance of the fire a number of persons were burned, and others died from their exertions toward subduing it.

Another large fire devastated a great portion of San Francisco in June, 1851. It occurred on the 22d of that month, and 500 buildings were destroyed by it. The loss was estimated at \$3,000,000.

PORTLAND (ME.), 1866.

The terrible fire which laid in ruins more than half of the city of Portland, Me., commenced at five o'clock on the afternoon of the 4th of July, 1866. Beginning in a cooper's shop at the foot of High street, caused by a fire-cracker being thrown among some wood shavings, it swept through the city with frightful rapidity. With difficulty did the inhabitants of the houses in its path escape with their lives. Little effort was made to save household goods when this saving involved a possibility of death. Everything in the track of the flames was destroyed, and so completely that when they had been overcome even the streets could hardly be traced. For a space of one mile and a half long by a quarter of a mile wide there seemed a straggling forest of chimneys, with parts of their walls attached. From the place of beginning the fire was swept by a violent gale in a devious way, sparing nothing in its passage until it was checked by the ruins of the houses which had been blown up. The utmost endeavors of the fire-

men of the city, aided by those from other cities and towns, were of little avail until the plan of blowing up had been carried out, and then only to prevent the fire from spreading, and cause it for want of fuel to burn out. One-half of the city, and the one which included its business portion, was destroyed. Every bank and all the newspaper offices were burned, and it is somewhat singular to note that all the lawyers' offices in the city were swept away. The splendid city and county building on Congress street was considered fire-proof and safe, and was filled with furniture from the neighboring houses, and then the flames catching it laid it in ruins. All the jewelry establishments, the wholesale drygoods houses, several churches, the telegraph offices, and the majority of other business places were destroyed. The Custom-house, though badly burned, was not destroyed. Most singularly a building on Middle street, occupied by a hardware firm, was left unscathed by the sea of flame which surged and devastated all around it.

Two thousand persons were rendered houseless, and were sheltered in churches and tents erected for them.

In all, the loss was estimated at \$10,000,000, which was but in small part covered by insurance.

CHARLESTON, 1838.

Charleston, S. C., was, on the 27th of April, 1838, visited by one of the most destructive fires that have ever occurred in any city in this country. A territory equal to almost one-half of the entire city was made desolate. The fire broke out at a quarter past eight o'clock on the morning of the day mentioned, in a paint shop on King street, corner of Beresford, and raged until about twelve A.M. of the following day. It was then arrested by the blowing up of buildings in its path. There were 1,158 buildings destroyed, and the loss occasioned was about \$3,000,000.

The worst feature of the catastrophe was the loss of life which occurred while the houses were being blown up. Through the careless manner in which the gunpowder was used, four of the most prominent citizens of the city were killed and a number injured.

CHICAGO, 1857, 1859, 1866, 1868.

On the morning of the 10th of October, 1857, a fire occurred in Chicago which, though notable from the amount of property destroyed by it, was made awful by the loss of human life which it caused. The fire broke out in a large double store in South Water street, and spread east and west to the buildings adjoining, and across an alley in the rear to a block of new buildings. All these were completely destroyed. When the flames were threatening one of the buildings, a number of persons ascended to its roof to there fight against them. Wholly occupied with their work, they did not notice that the wall of the burning building tottered, and, when warned of their danger, they could not escape ere it fell, crushing through the house on which they were, and carrying them into its cellar. Of the number fourteen were killed and more injured. The loss in property caused by the fire amounted to over half a million of dollars.

A fire, the most disastrous after that of October, 1857, took place on September 15, 1859. It broke out in a stable, and, spreading in different directions, consumed the block bounded by Clinton, North Canal, West Lake, and Fulton streets, on which the stable was situated. From this block the fire was communicated to Blatchford's lead works and to the hydraulic mills, whence it passed to another block of buildings, all of which were destroyed. The total loss was about five hundred thousand dollars.

Property to the amount of \$500,000 was destroyed by fire on the 10th of August, 1866. The fire originated in a wholesale

tobacco establishment on South Water street, and passed to the adjoining buildings, occupied by wholesale grocery and drug firms. The first two buildings and contents were utterly, while the other was but partially, destroyed.

A fire, which destroyed several large business houses on Lake and South Water streets; took place November 18, 1866. It originated in the tobacco warehouse of Banker & Co., and the loss caused by it was about \$500,000.

The fire which occurred on the 28th of January, 1868, was the most destructive by which Chicago had ever been visited. It broke out in a large boot and shoe factory on Lake street, and destroyed the entire block on which that building was situated. The sparks from those buildings set fire to others distant from them on the same street, and caused their destruction. In all the loss was about \$3,000,000.

TABLE OF FORMER GREAT FIRES.

Norfolk, Va., destroyed by fire, and the cannon-balls of the British. Property to the amount of \$1,500,000 destroyed. January 1, 1776.

City of New York, soon after passing into possession of the British; 500 buildings consumed. September 20-21, 1776.

Theatre at Richmond, Va. The governor of the State and a large number of the leading inhabitants perished. December 26, 1811.

City of New York; 530 buildings destroyed; loss, \$20,000,000. December 16, 1835.

Washington City; General Post-Office and Patent Office, with over ten thousand valuable models, drawings, etc., destroyed. December 15, 1836.

Philadelphia; fifty-two buildings destroyed; loss, \$500,000. October 5, 1839.

Quebec, Canada; 1,500 buildings and many lives destroyed. May 28, 1845.

Quebec, Canada; 1,300 buildings destroyed. June 28, 1845.

City of New York; 300 buildings destroyed; loss, \$6,000,000. June 20, 1845.

St. John's, N. F., nearly destroyed; 6,000 people made homeless. June 12, 1846.

Quebec, Canada; Theatre Royal; 47 persons burned to death. June 14, 1846.

Nantucket; 300 buildings and other property destroyed; value, \$800,000. July 13, 1846.

At Albany; 600 buildings, steamboats, piers, etc., destroyed; loss, \$3,000,000. August 17, 1848.

Brooklyn; 300 buildings destroyed. September 9, 1848.

At St. Louis, 15 blocks of houses and 23 steamboats; loss estimated at \$3,000,000. May 17, 1849.

Frederickton, N. B.; about 300 buildings destroyed. November 11, 1850.

Nevada, Cal.; 200 buildings destroyed; loss, \$1,300,000. March 12, 1851.

At Stockton, Cal.; loss, \$1,500,000. May 14, 1851.

Concord, N. H.; greater part of the business portion of the town destroyed. August 24, 1850.

Congressional Library, at Washington, 35,000 volumes, with works of art, destroyed. December 24, 1851.

At Montreal, Canada, 1,000 houses destroyed; loss, \$5,000,000. July 8, 1852.

Harper Brothers' establishment, in this city; loss over \$1,000,000. December 10, 1853.

Metropolitan Hall and Lafarge House, in this city. January 8, 1854.

At Jersey City, 30 factories and houses destroyed. July 30, 1854.

More than 100 houses and factories in Troy, N. Y.; on the same day a large part of Milwaukee, Wis., destroyed. August 25, 1854.

At Syracuse, N. Y., about 100 buildings destroyed; loss, \$1,000,000. November 8, 1856.

New York Crystal Palace destroyed. October 5, 1858.

City of Charleston, S. C., almost destroyed. February 17, 1856.

At Quebec, Canada, 2,500 houses destroyed; loss, \$2,500,000.

